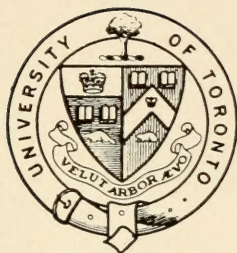


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FIVE YEARS UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS

F. C. SPURR



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**FIVE YEARS UNDER THE
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FIVE YEARS UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS

Experiences and Impressions

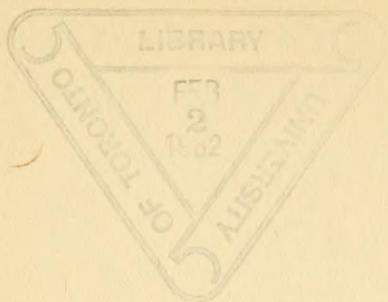
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By
FREDERIC C. SPURR
Late Minister of First Baptist Church, Melbourne



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1915





TO

*My Children, NORMAN FÉLIX and
MADELEINE DOROTHY, who spent their
five "years of awakening" under the
Southern Cross, and chiefly to their
Mother, MY WIFE AND COMRADE, who
made Australia not only her home but
her workshop, in which she tried, with
much success, to do something to help
and bless her sisters.*

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PREFACE

FOR five years, during my residence in Australia, I had the privilege of contributing to the English *Christian World* a large number of articles on life in the Commonwealth. These articles excited a great amount of interest amongst all classes, and brought me a vast correspondence, which made it abundantly clear that even well-educated people at home know little about the inner life of Australia. This book is an attempt to throw some light upon that far-off country, and to make Australia "live." Many books have been written about the Commonwealth, but none quite on the lines of the following pages. In a series of impressionist sketches various phases of Australian life are set forth—the life in the midst of which I worked. The editor of the *Christian World* has generously permitted me to make free use of the articles I contributed to that journal. I gratefully acknowledge this kindness.

FREDERIC C. SPURR.

*Regent's Park Chapel,
London, N.W.*

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FIVE YEARS UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS

FOREWORD

AUSTRALIA'S PLACE IN THE EMPIRE

THE average Englishman and the average Australian have at least one thing in common : each of them is profoundly ignorant of the inner life of that country in which his fellow-subjects, separated from him by a distance of twelve thousand miles, dwell.

The average Australian knows by name the chief cities of Britain; he knows a little about British exports and imports; he knows as much of English politics as scanty cables and the letters of special correspondents inform him. If he is a religious man he knows also the names of the outstanding preachers of various churches. Beyond this he has only the haziest ideas of the conditions of life in the Mother Country. When a cable message informs him that London is enveloped in a thick fog, or that Britain is frost-bound, he fervently thanks God that his lot has been cast in a country where "the amount of bright sunshine" has not to be registered each day in the winter-time. Of the inner life of the Old Land

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he knows nothing at all, nor can he grasp, unless he is particularly well informed, the true meaning of current political and social movements. For this he is in no way to be censured; it is the fatality of distance that weighs upon him. I am speaking of the *average*, untravellered Australian. It is very different, of course, with those persons who have visited the Homeland, and who, open-eyed and impressionable, have come to understand what English life stands for. When such travellers return to Australia they rarely speak of the Old Country as "having seen its best days." While they very properly deplore the overcrowding of English towns and cities, and in particular are aghast at the alarming development of slumdom, they also recognise that the energy of Britain is more than equal to that social regeneration for which the new time calls. In my judgment, Australians need a much fuller and a much fairer statement, continually renewed, of the actual condition of things in the Motherland. It should be possible, for example, to describe the course of British politics in an impartial manner, leaving Australians to form their own judgment upon the undoubted facts supplied to them. At present this is rarely done.

On the other hand, what does the average Englishman know about Australia? In his mind it is connected with a big export trade in apples, wool, wheat, meat, rabbits, and butter. He reads of the "Bush" and of the aborigines, of the kangaroo, and of the laughing jackass. He knows the names of

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its chief cities—Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane. He has heard also that Australia is the working man's paradise; that legislation tends in the direction of Socialism; that in Parliament there are often some lively scenes, and that in summer the heat is intense. For the rest, Australia is to him a vast, lone country situated at the Antipodes, a long, long way off across the seas, and a place to which, if a man goes, he must suffer the inconvenience of being cut off from the rest of the world. "Australia? Yes! One of our colonies under the Southern Cross!" Now it is time that the abysmal ignorance which prevails concerning this great country should, once for all, be dissipated. Englishmen ought to realise that Australia, so far from being a vast, lone land situated in a corner of the world, difficult of access, is in reality situated *in the very centre of the British Empire*, and that, because of this situation, it is destined to play a great part in the coming life of that Empire.

Let me try to make this point abundantly clear.

The British Empire consists of the United Kingdom, India, parts of Africa, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and a number of small islands, fortified rocks, coaling stations, and the like. The population of the whole Empire is well over four hundred millions—representing one-quarter of the entire population of the world. Great Britain itself—the Motherland, the centre of government—has less than one-eighth of the population of the Empire. *The other seven-eighths are far nearer to Australia than*

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to Great Britain. That is the great point to be observed. In other words, Australia is in closer physical touch with India than is England, while it is quite as near to Africa (nearer, indeed, to Eastern Africa) and Western Canada as is England.

Let the reader procure a map of the globe and carefully examine the situation of Australia from this point of view; and if he has never observed it before, it will probably come home to him with something of a shock. From Adelaide to Capetown or Durban is a matter of fourteen or fifteen days' good steaming. From London to Capetown is no quicker, if as quick. And that the present average rate of steaming between Durban and Australia can easily be accelerated is clearly proved by the fact that the new White Star steamer *Ceramic* recently accomplished the journey from Liverpool to Melbourne via the Cape in two days less than an Orient steamer which left London on the same day and proceeded by the Suez route. It is all a question of coal, and in time of need the consumption of coal would not be a primary consideration.

Still follow the map, and observe that the distance between Sydney and Vancouver is little greater than that between England and Vancouver. The whole of Western Canada is open to traffic with Australia, and there is no great stretch of country to cross by rail. Here, again, an accelerated steamer service would bring Sydney and Vancouver within fifteen or sixteen days of each other.

Continuing with the map, it will be seen that

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between Fremantle, in Western Australia, and Colombo or Bombay there lies the open stretch of water known as the Indian Ocean. The usual time allowed by the mail steamers for crossing between these two points is nine to ten days. The S.S. *Maloja*, in which I travelled to England last year, accomplished the voyage between Fremantle and Colombo in seven and a half days, Bombay being two days farther north. That is to say, by an ordinary mail steamer, Fremantle and Bombay lie within ten days of each other. This time could easily be reduced by a day or a day and a half. There are three hundred millions of the subjects of the King in India. These are ruled from England. Bombay, "the gate of India," cannot be reached from England in less than fourteen days, travelling overland from London to Brindisi, and thence by sea. And there is the narrow Suez Canal to traverse, a piece of water that an enemy could in an hour render impossible for traffic. From Australia to India there is one great piece of open sea; there is no canal liable to be blocked; *and Bombay is nearer to Australia than to England by four or five days.*

These are simple facts, verifiable by any person who will give himself a little trouble. And do they not show that Australia, so far from being in a corner, out of the way—an appendage, as it were, to the Empire—is in reality situated in the centre of the Empire, within almost equal distance of India, Africa, and Canada?

But there is something far more important than

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this. Unfold the map once more, and it will be clearly seen that Australia is not only in the centre of our own Empire, it is also in close touch with those countries whose awakening and rise to importance constitute a new and grave problem for the lands of the West and for America. Three decades ago Japan was known as "the hermit nation." Its people lived in a long, narrow island, far enough removed from the important countries of the West to cause *them* any anxiety. They were a remote people, these Japanese; close in their habits, clever with their fingers, tinted with yellow on their skins, and for the rest—"heathen." But they did not "reckon" in the councils of the West. And then suddenly there came a bolt from the blue—this small, remote people went to war with the biggest nation in Europe, and beat them. That was the surprise. In a day the prestige of the hermit nation was established. The triumph of Japan, it is not too much to say, served to disquiet the whole world of the West and America. A new problem arose. All eyes were fixed upon the Pacific. What ferment was at work in the distant East? And to what extent would it spread? From the East all the wisdom of the West had originally come. But for many centuries the East had been asleep, while the West marched on. Was a new epoch dawning? Was this victory of Japan an affair of chance, or did it indicate the appearance of a new era and a new order? Was time, with its whirligig, bringing things back to their beginning, and once more thrusting the East

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into the first place? Was Bismarck, after all, a true seer when he spoke of the coming "Yellow peril"?

After Japan came the awakening of China. Wise men from that country, impressed with the victory of Japan, and well knowing that Japan owed her position to the knowledge she had gained from Western civilisation, came over to Britain to study the state of affairs in the West. The mission bore immediate fruit. China began to turn over in her sleep, and eventually she awoke. In a day an ancient dynasty was overturned and a republic set up. The ways of the "foreign devils" were no longer resisted, they were accepted. Railways were laid down in all directions; a new army was created; the ancient skirts of the soldiers were exchanged for British khaki; the pigtail disappeared; Western education became common. The Peking of to-day, with its railway stations and bustling Western life, would astound any person who saw it, say, ten short years ago. China is awake; she is strong; she is numerous; within her territory there live one-quarter of the world's population. The West has for long enough insulted China. It has contemptuously spoken of the "heathen Chinese." The odious opium traffic was forced upon her—shame to record—by British India. When insulted people turn, they are apt to become dangerous. If the four hundred millions of Chinese turn, and bear down upon the West, they can, as Bismarck said, crush, with the sheer force of millions of massed men, their opponents. There is a possible

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"Yellow peril." It may not take much to make it actual.

There is a third factor, upon which it may not be advisable to dwell at length—the disquiet of India. It is a species of madness to pooh-pooh the outbursts of rebellion, the attempted assassinations, the inflammatory articles in native papers, and other symptoms of unrest as being mere local and unmeaning disturbances. The truth is, there is, or has been until the war, widespread discontent in India. Into the causes of this it is not proposed to enter here and now. Sufficient for the present purpose to take note of the fact and to treat it seriously.

Now, these three nations, between them, *contain more than one-half of the world's entire population*. They are the nations of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific. Australia lies within easy touch of them all. She is much nearer to them than is England, and if trouble broke out she might be the very first of the British possessions to feel it. Australia means that Britain is already in the Pacific—upon the spot, so to speak, where the trouble is gathering.

The creation of a new and a final factor in the situation is due to the opening of the Panama Canal. This mighty engineering work has now been completed, and the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans at last mingle. The canal has primarily, so the majority seem to think, a mercantile importance. It has brought the eastern coastline of the United States into direct and rapid communication by water with Australia, China, the islands of the Pacific, and

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a rich tropical zone, the exploiting of which, commercially, will mean much for American, British, and other markets. For purposes of trade, the canal is one of the most important water highways ever constructed. A new centre of shipping activity has been opened up, with consequences the extent of which at present can hardly be computed.

The canal, however, has a political importance which surpasses all else. To use the words of an American statesman, "this canal means infinitely more than the opening of a passage between one sea and another; *it may yet mean the transference of international interests from the Mediterranean to the Pacific.*"* What part the canal will play in such an event need not be discussed here. The point is that a displacement of political power—an entire change of interests—is by no means improbable; and, indeed, if the East, awakening, comes into the possession of its proper inheritance, it is more than likely to happen. What, then, of our relative interests in the North Sea and in the Indian Ocean? We British are so accustomed to the idea of government from a centre in a little island called "Britain" that we should probably scoff at the suggestion that one day, owing to a change of interests and the presenting of new aspects of powerful Eastern life, we might find it convenient and necessary to make Australia and not Britain the governmental centre of the Empire.

* This was written before the Great European War broke out. Whatever be the issue of this war, the main contention of the above paragraphs remains true.

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But the idea may be worth thinking over for all that. Similar things have happened to other peoples before, and they may happen again. Putting aside all opinions and predictions, the simple facts remain that Australia at present is situated in the very centre of the British Empire, and that it is within easy touch of those nations which, by every sign, have to be seriously reckoned with in the near future.

Australia is in the possession of the British people. This is a trite enough remark to make, but the remarkable thing, when we really think about it, is that the remark can be so easily made. The wonder is that it is not Dutch or Spanish or French. Explorers from each of these lands discovered it, and left it unoccupied. When the Dutch were foraging in Southern waters, they were the finest seamen of their time. Small as a nation, they were great business people and fine colonists. Yet they left Australia behind, after a passing acquaintance with its coast. It was reserved for Captain Cook to claim the hitherto *terra incognita* in the name of the people of Britain. To people who recognise in historical events nothing but the collisions of chance, the exploit of Captain Cook was a lucky adventure. To those of us who try to look below the surface of things, the event was a providence. Let the enemies of Britain say their worst of us—and they can point to many a discreditable thing in our history—it remains true that British sentiment, enlightened by Christianity, has more and more tended towards liberty and justice for all the people who come under her sway. Under

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any other flag would Australia, with all its faults, have become the country that it is?

If Divine destiny, and not blind chance, has reserved for the British race this immense country of Australia, and the British people faithfully fulfil their Divine and human mission in the world, then it is easy to perceive that this new land in the Southern Ocean will become a centre of healthful influence for the entire Pacific. And if to British influence in the South there is joined—through the medium of the Panama Canal—a powerful American influence of the highest quality, the Pacific may yet lead the world's future, as the Mediterranean has for hundreds of years led the past.

CHAPTER I

GOING TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

TO the Australian shores there pass, in ever-increasing numbers, steamers of every size and of every nationality. They go from America, from India, from Japan, from China, from France, and from Britain. The world has discovered Australia to be a fine continent for business. Year by year the tonnage of steamers grows. It is a far cry from the little cockle-boat of 300 tons which touched at Sydney Harbour a century ago to the new majestic liners of 13,000 tons which now ply between Tilbury and Sydney. The limitations of the Suez Canal seem to have determined the size of the largest steamers outward bound by that route. Via the Cape, there are no such restrictions; hence the White Star Company has been able to place its steamer, the *Ceramic*, a vessel of 18,000 tons, on the Australian trade, and the limit is not yet reached. There is no reason why steamers equal to the Atlantic greyhounds should not yet ply between Britain and Melbourne. The twin difficulties would be, obviously, fuel and food. The shorter journeys between England and Canada, England and the States, or England and the Mediterranean, offer no difficulty in the

Going to the Ends of the Earth

way of coal or provisions. But what of a voyage of six or seven weeks? The present arrangements are marvellous enough. Passengers pass from port to port without anxiety. Their table is always well spread. There is enough and to spare. Even at the end of a long voyage English sole and salmon appear on the menu for dinner. How is it all accomplished? The ease of working means that behind all there is a perfect organisation, which for the average passenger, however, remains enveloped in mystery. The varied menus at table indicate the existence of an immense reserve somewhere in the ship. I determine, if possible, to fathom the secret of a ship's working. The man who knows everything is the purser, but previous experience makes me shy of pursers—at least, some of them. I remember the uniform, the haughty manners, the snobbishness, the air of condescension, the impression that a god had descended to earth and taken to the career of a purser. Is *our* purser of this type? I wonder! I approach him, and find him to be a splendid fellow—dignified, kind, courteous, and ready to do all in his power to satisfy my request. He places in my hands a book of romance. In point of fact, it is a book of quantities and prices, of descriptions and instructions; page after page deals with edibles of all kinds. To the purser all this is business; to me it is romance and miracle, for it represents the arrangements made to feed a little world, cut off from the rest of men, and launched upon the immense waters of the ocean.

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These pages of dry figures, matter-of-fact as they are, simple as they are, represent years of experience and experiment. There is no likelihood of passengers ever starving; a generous margin is allowed, over and above actual needs, for eventualities. Nor is there likelihood of monotony in menus. The variety of provisions is astounding. These pages, dealing with the commissariat of the ship, contain a list of thirty-eight different kinds of soup, nearly 100 varieties of fish, entrées and sauces galore. The fundamentals of eating and drinking bulk more largely, of course, than anything else. Thus this ship started on its voyage with 1,400 lbs. of biscuits, 76 barrels and 216 bags of flour, 5,000 lbs. of butter, 10,000 eggs, 1,500 lbs. of coffee, and 10,000 lbs. of beef. Sugar is the heaviest item of all, being 12,000 lbs. Then follow hundreds of bottles of preserved fruit, poultry and game of all kinds, dried fruits of every description, jams, jellies, and marmalade to repletion, tinned meats and fish, raisins, currants, salt, milk, bacon, and vegetables of all kinds. Nothing seems missing. The list is prodigious. Not a taste is left unprovided for. At every port fresh provisions are taken in. The purser has a list of tradesmen at every place of call. He knows exactly what can be obtained, where it can be obtained, when, and at what price. His book informs him that it is not advisable to procure certain things at certain places. There are regular providers who undertake to furnish the ship with provisions. Woe to any of these men if they play tricks with the company; if for once only they

Going to the Ends of the Earth

supply inferior food their names are forthwith struck off the list, and no amount of pleading will succeed in having them replaced there. It is the unpardonable sin to supply stuff of inferior quality. I noted a line in the instructions which means much: "The company pay full price (for articles), and they expect none but the best quality."

So this is how the purchasing and storing are done. Everything is reduced to an exact science. There is no experimenting, no guessing. The steamers leave the home ports ready for all demands likely to be made upon them.

The next question is that of storage. How is all the fresh food—meat, vegetables, poultry, fish, etc.—kept? Even a child to-day would reply in a word—"cold storage." But this means much more than it seems to mean. Cold storage is a fine art, and a still finer art is that of thawing. It would appear to be a perfectly simple thing to remove a piece of meat or some poultry from the cold chamber and roast it for the table. But it is far from simple. Unless the thawing is properly done, the joint is ruined. Hence, elaborate instructions are issued both for freezing and for thawing fresh foods. It is really wonderful, when one comes to think of it, that food can be preserved from corruption by the application of cold; but the cold must be scientifically applied. In the refrigerating chamber the temperature is kept from 20 degrees to 25 degrees—"It snows there." Stewards who enter the chamber for business purposes are compelled to dress in special garments, so

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as to avoid a sudden chill, with its possible fatal consequences. The air in the cold chamber is changed three times a week. And so it is all a miracle of atmosphere, regulated at will.

The practical work of preparing meals for passengers is very fascinating. The kitchens are models of cleanliness. No slovenliness is permitted. Most of the food is untouched by hand. Dough is mixed by a machine. Bread and cakes are cut by a patent knife. Potatoes are peeled by a huge "peeler," which removes only the minimum of skin. There are enormous roasters and steam cookers, which perform their work with absolute precision. The kitchen of a great liner is a place of wonder, and the scullery is only second to it. Here labour is saved at every turn. Knives are cleaned in a new and expeditious manner; plates are washed by steam and dried in a whirling machine turned by electricity at a terrific rate of speed. Science operates everywhere. There is no chance for germs to develop. Every man has his place and his duty. Galley fires must be lighted at 4 A.M.; cooks must be on duty at a certain fixed hour. Stewards have their duties clearly defined. Nothing is left to chance. The discipline of the ship is perfect.

But while we examine this fascinating department of ship life, we become aware of an increasing throb in the engines. The boat is rolling heavily. The sea is behaving badly; and we are seized with a desire to go below and see life in the nethermost regions of the boat. It has been represented to us

Going to the Ends of the Earth

as a kind of inferno, in which men work naked. In company with the "chief" we descend to the engine-room. Here four powerful engines turn the steel shafts, which in turn move the propellers. At last we arrive at the ultimate expression of force in this wonderful ship. All is now left behind, save the thick steel shafts which run horizontally through the stern of the vessel. Silently and swiftly they move round, forcing the propellers outside to displace the waters of the ocean, and so urge forward the steamer. It is a weird experience to descend to the very bottom of the steamer, into its uttermost corner, where the boat is narrowest, and to watch the steel shafts ever turn round. The mighty vessel above us depends in reality upon these shafts. If they broke, and could not be replaced, the steamer would lie upon the bosom of the water a helpless mass of iron and steel. One frail plate of steel between us and destruction! The idea is chilling.

I dreaded the furnaces—the satanic stokehole, where men suffer in the presence of broiling heat. But when we pass into this region of the ship, where is the inferno? To my utter astonishment, the stokehole is cooler than the engine-room. A pleasant draught of cool air plays around the stokers, who are *not* naked nor perspiring. Despite roaring fires and enormous boilers, the room is pleasantly cool. Thus another illusion has disappeared. The old order of things has changed. Science has rendered service more humane. The terrors of life are one by one departing.

CHAPTER II

THE GOLDEN WEST

PASSENGERS from England to Australia via the Cape generally touch Australian soil first at Albany. They thus miss the true "gateway" into the country, Fremantle. This latter city is the port for Perth; it is the traveller's first introduction to Australia if he travels via the Suez and Ceylon. And glad is he to behold land once more after the monotonous voyage of ten days across the Indian Ocean. A languid air steals over the ship during the time it is in the region of the Equator. At night the decks are strewn with mattresses for the accommodation of passengers who prefer to "sleep out" rather than be stifled in intolerable cabins. Then, if the season be that of the Australian winter (June to August), the heat gradually moderates, and by the time the boat reaches Fremantle all white clothing has been discarded, and men are thankful once more to take to blankets and heavier dress.

The development of Western Australia has been remarkable. For many years it lay practically stagnant; then in a moment its progress commenced. The discovery of gold made all the difference. Twenty years ago Perth was a mere village, with

The Golden West

all the disadvantages of a village. Many of its houses were primitive and ugly. A few relics of that period still survive. Certain houses were built of kerosene tins; many more of wood. A neglected look characterised the place. "Squalid," one old inhabitant calls it; but that is probably an exaggeration. It had a beautiful natural situation, being built upon a slope of the lovely Swan River. Yet the city at that time was badly lighted and badly drained. It brought little credit to its fair surroundings. In the long ago the French, the Portuguese, and the Dutch had in turn visited the West, named it, and then passed on. And now it seemed but a few years ago as if the British, in the persons of their Australian children, had determined to leave no mark upon the same West.

It was the discovery of gold, I say, that made the difference. Just twenty years ago Coolgardie was a desert. But into its wilds two men had penetrated, prospecting for gold. There came a day when, quite suddenly, the desert was transformed into a treasure house. In one evening these men possessed themselves of 500 ounces of pure gold. Aladdin's chamber had been found at last. The news of the discovery spread with amazing rapidity. A frenzy seized the people. Men threw down their tools, broke up their homes, abandoned their situations, and proceeded in a mad rush to the goldfields. There was no road for them to travel over, nothing but a wild track. Each man made his own path. Whatever conveyance happened to be within reach

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was requisitioned for the conveyance of such conveniences as the goldfields might require. One man, unable to procure anything better, seized a wheelbarrow, in which he pushed his few goods along the terrible 350 miles of desert. From every State steamers brought hundreds and thousands of men who were seized with the lust of gold. Australia turned out its gamblers into the desert. A city soon sprang up; a strange medley of human elements. Land which yesterday was worse than worthless now fetched pounds per foot. Saloon keepers made easy fortunes by selling drink at fancy prices. Houses of every kind sprang up like mushrooms. The most curious house of all was built of bottles, cemented together with some kind of mortar. A year later Kalgoorlie was discovered—an earlier Klondyke. The new field speedily eclipsed the old. Coolgardie lost its prestige, and, while it continues to thrive in certain directions, it has given place to its brilliant rival. A splendid story this, of the discovery of gold, and as sordid as it is splendid. In the easy gaining of gold men have lost themselves. The stories I have heard from men who were on the fields cannot be set down in print; no newspaper or book dare give publicity to them. This camp of men, with no idea but that of gaining as much gold as possible, men without ideals and often without pity, with the beauty of humanity crushed out of them, as the machinery of the goldfields crushes to dust the quartz that passes beneath its wheels, living only for gold, spending much of it in drink and lust, consumed with the fever

The Golden West

of getting—ah! the story of the world's goldfields is largely a story of hell upon earth, of the abasement of the soul to the lust of the eye and the pride of life. There is another side to it, and that is the prodigious folly of allowing this precious metal—the standard for the world's commerce—to be scrambled for by the first-comers, upon conditions that are as economically ridiculous as they are morally pernicious. . . .

After the frenzy, the reaction. After the rush to the goldfields, the cultivation of the land. The real prosperity of the Golden West lies not in the quantity of gold secured by adventurers, but in the honest work put into the soil. Prospecting continues all the time. Old reefs are still being worked and new ones sought for. In these vast spaces there is hidden an enormous quantity of gold. At any moment some new reef may come to light, and then will follow a new rush to the fields; yet another outbreak of the fever which renders men delirious, and for the time destroys all their higher ideals of life. Meanwhile, Australia is becoming golden in another and a better sense. By means of honest labour its millions of acres are yielding the most remarkable crops of cereals, roots, and fruits. Gradually the enormous spaces are being subdued and inhabited by a race of men and women who rejoice in the golden sunshine, and who abandon themselves with the zest of children to the magic of life.

And it is in this direction that the West is now

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prospering. The people generally are really well off. The State revenue for last year was about four millions sterling. These 300,000 people have invested in the State Savings Bank no less a sum than £4,387,639. This means an average per head of the population of £14 10s. 4d., and an average per depositor of £45 8s. 9d. Such figures are eloquent of what may be called the general prosperity of the community. The real source of wealth, however, is the land. This year there are more than one million acres of ground under crop. More than a quarter of a million acres have been "cleared" and prepared for ploughing and sowing during the present year. There are 788,349 acres of wheat and 77,488 acres of oats growing at the present time. Last year nearly four and a half million bushels of wheat and a million bushels of oats were produced from the land. This means immense prosperity. The State is rich enough to spend much money in reclaiming waste land and in rebuilding the old houses. During the last twenty years Perth has been practically rebuilt. I was astonished to behold its beautiful buildings. It possesses splendid Government offices, a fine museum and art gallery, a noble Mint, and almost palatial public buildings. Warehouses and stores, suites of offices, banks, insurance buildings, business premises, and the like, are imposing. Perth promises to be one day a great and noble city. Already the capital is extending. Within a radius of twelve miles one-third of the entire population of the West resides. Sir John Forrest declared that

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the time would come when Perth and Fremantle and all between would become one vast city. I can quite believe it. Perth is the San Francisco of Australia.

As another evidence of prosperity, the following wages table may be adduced: Bakers get 63s. per week; barbers 55s.; barmen and barmaids 65s.; bootmakers 13½d. an hour; carpenters 1s. 6d. an hour; butchers' shopmen 60s. to 80s. per week; drapers' assistants (at Coolgardie) 70s. per week; engine-drivers 1s. 6d. an hour; night watchmen 54s. per week; tailors 70s. per week; and waiters 25s. a week and board. It is all very attractive, but on the other side let these facts be considered: Potatoes are 4d. per lb.; peas 9d. per lb.; cauliflowers from 1s. to 2s. 6d. each; apples (grown on the spot) 6d. and 7d. per lb.—at the present time. One needs a large income to keep pace with these ridiculous prices, which are due largely, I understand, to the manipulations of a "ring."

And yet, with it all, life here for working men is infinitely more tolerable than in England. It is in truth an El Dorado.

The story of this Golden West is thus a veritable romance. Yet this State has the smallest population of all the States, fewer than 300,000 people covering its million square miles. Its territory is eighteen times as large as that of England and Wales. Imagine this enormous space occupied by a handful of people, about as many as are found in the single city of Bradford, Yorkshire. And these 300,000 people are confined to one or two places in the

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State. For the rest, there are vast and terrible deserts awaiting the exploring skill of man. Already, in the remarkable water scheme undertaken on behalf of the goldfields, it is demonstrated that science can overcome the almost insuperable difficulties presented by Nature in these deserted regions.

In Western Australia nearly every variety of climate is experienced, from the insufferable tropical heat of the North to the delightful cool of the South. At the seaboard the sky and the climate are delightful. Winters are practically unknown. Children born in the land have no idea what snow is like. Even in the depth of winter the days are warm, and often hot. Overcoats are used only as a protection against rain, and when rain falls protection is needed. The water descends, not in drops, but in bucketfuls. Here Nature seems partial and extreme. The rainy season is well defined, and when it ends it ends. Not a drop of rain falls between October and May. There is need, therefore, for the exercise of human science in order to conserve the precious liquid which descends so plentifully in the season for use in the arid season of the year.

And yet Western Australia is at present cut off from the rest of Australia. To reach Adelaide, the capital of the neighbouring State, it is necessary to voyage by steamer across the dreaded "Bight"—a journey of five or more days. In two or three years, however, this isolation will be ended.

A wonderful forward step was taken in 1912 by the cutting of the first sod of the Trans-Continental

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Railway. The line begins at Port Augusta, in South Australia, and ends at Kalgoorlie, on the goldfield in Western Australia. In length it is over 1,000 miles, and when it is completed there will be direct railway communication between Queensland and Fremantle—a line of 3,000 miles. But if Australia as a whole is to benefit by it there must be a uniform gauge of rail. Insensate jealousy between the States, and a short-sighted policy on the part of the leaders, resulted, in earlier days, in the establishment of various gauges on the different railways, with the result that there can be no through service of trains from the North-East to the West without change of carriage. This, however, will certainly be remedied. When all is completed, and a fast service of trains established, England and Australia will be brought much nearer to each other than they are at present. With an accelerated speed of steamers across the Indian Ocean, it ought to be possible to bring Fremantle and Marseilles within three weeks of each other.

CHAPTER III

AN ACCOMPLISHED MIRACLE AND A PREDICTION

THE problem of obtaining water, of conserving it, and of distributing it, is *the* problem of Western Australia. In the Eastern States there are many natural waterways, which in part solve the question of irrigation. In the West there are few or none. Until a year or two ago Nature wore a stern aspect outside the few inhabited spots in the West. The desert stretched for hundreds of miles. The country was trackless. Transit was accomplished by the aid of camels. There were no wells or oases to relieve the monotony of the everlasting sand dunes. For the greater part of the year rain does not fall, and when it does it penetrates the sand and rapidly disappears beneath the surface. Water is the need of these great areas. Wherever men have obtained and conserved water, there, as by magic, the face of Nature has been changed. And one day, by the help of science, the transformation will be complete: the desert will blossom as the rose; in the wilderness will springs of water be found.

When the goldfields were opened up the first demand was for water. It was more precious than wine. The gold reefs were situated in the midst of

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a sterile region entirely inhospitable for man. Water in small quantities was gained and jealously kept. Superfluous baths were not permitted. Photographs of the early scenes in the goldfields suggest the lack of cleanliness. To-day all this is changed. In that former desert settlement there are green lawns and flower gardens. The hard lines on the face of Nature have been softened. The beauty of virginal youth is lacking, but it is much to have gained what has already been won. Five million gallons of pure water are pumped daily a distance of 350 miles, from the coast to the goldfields. It is a triumph of engineering, one of the marvels of the modern world. It was to the scene of the Mani reservoir at Mundaring that we were conveyed by the courtesy of the Government officials, who placed at our disposal an automobile. The "Bush" in every part of Australia possesses certain common features. There are the interminable stretches of wild country, heavily timbered with every variety of eucalyptus tree; the glorious splashes of brilliant yellow wattle; the "clearings" here and there, where settlers transform the unruly riot of Nature's wild life into the beautiful order of cultivated gardens; the isolated church and school-house; and charred stumps of trees reduced to desolation by the all-devouring forest fires. In the world of animal and bird life there are the wallaby, the kangaroo, the dingo, the treacherous snake, the impudent magpie, the destructive parrot, and the clown of the bush—the laughing jackass. All these we encounter on our journey.

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The bush is at once fascinating and oppressive. These awful solitudes; this terrifying stillness! Oh, for the roar of London traffic for one brief hour to break the spell cast over us by the eternal silence of the unending forest. It is all so primitive, so simple, is life in the bush. We pass the pillar post-box—a kerosene tin affixed to a tree. Now and again we cross a solitary railway line, over which trains run twice a week. The notice, "Look out for the trains," seems to be the quintessence of humour; one might wait during half a week before a train appeared on this bush railway. One strange notice smites us with a smart stroke. It runs thus: "*Twenty Miles to YORK.*" So there is a York here; the newest York of all! These notices, natural enough to the inhabitants, seem *bizarre* to us. "Twenty miles to York." Ah, then! in an hour's time this flight through the bush will turn out to have been a curious dream, and we shall be gazing upon the towers of the Minster! . . . Some of the houses we pass are incarnate poems. Built of wood and surrounded with ample balconies, they are festooned with masses of roses, buried, in fact, beneath the bloom of a thousand flowers. In the gardens surrounding these houses grow oranges, lemons, and palms in profusion, together with fruit and vegetables of every description. Already in this early springtime—corresponding in time to an English April—peas and beans are nearly ready for gathering.

But the wild flowers! We stop the car and penetrate into the bush to gather handfuls of the most

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wonderful wild flowers I have ever seen. The flora is unique both in colouring and in fantastic shapes. Some of these wild flowers are not found in any other part of the world. We are here at the precise season for beholding this display at its very best. The air is heavy with a strange and subtle perfume. The exquisite and unique scent of the boronia dominates all, while the fainter perfume of the golden wattle insinuates itself, despite its proximity to the heavily scented boronia. In an hour we have gathered an armful of flowers representing every tint known to nature. Above them all stands out, first, "the kangaroo's paw," surely one of the oddest productions of the magician Nature. A long, slender stalk, measuring one or two feet in length, and terminating in a flower resembling the outspread paw of the kangaroo—that is the "kangaroo's paw." Sometimes the colour is green and scarlet, sometimes black, sometimes purple, orange or red. It is the assertive flower of the forest: the flower one cannot fail to notice. And then, think of it, O Englishmen who gaze in rapture at delicate and expensive orchids; amongst the wild flowers of Western Australia grows the orchid—the orchid grows *wild* here! A member of our party once gathered in one afternoon no less than fourteen varieties of the wild orchid. One sees here, growing in a perfectly wild state, flowers and plants which are highly treasured in hot-houses "at home," and for which high prices are gladly paid. But it must be remembered that Western Australia is one gigantic, natural hot-house.

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And now we have reached the weir at Mundaring. Here, situated in the midst of magnificent scenery, is the immense artificial reservoir, with its capacity for 4,600 million gallons of water. This enormous tank collects all the water of the district. From here it is pumped through a steel conduit by a series of eight pumping installations to the main distributing reservoir, 308 miles away; then by gravitation it descends to the two great goldfields at Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie. The engine plant is said to be the finest in the world. Of course, it was constructed in Great Britain. The entire cost of the scheme was £3,300,000, an enormous sum of money for fewer than 300,000 people to find for supplying water to two cities and the towns *en route*. The whole work was planned and consummated in five years. It ended in conferring a boon upon the people—or some of them—and in bringing tragedy to the chief engineer, who, worried beyond endurance with the criticisms passed upon his work, committed suicide.

We were happy in being able to see the reservoir when it overflowed with water, the surplus passing over the weir in a long, graceful sheet, thus joining the water of the river below. This living blind, incessantly being drawn down, dancing as it fell, offered a spectacle of rare beauty. Western Australia has good reason to be proud of its achievement in constructing this admirable piece of hydraulic engineering. It stands quite unique in the history of the world. Nothing else of a similar nature is on such a great scale.

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The experiment has been successful, and it has pointed out the way in which one of the greatest difficulties in a desert country may be overcome. Sufficient water falls in the course of the year for all purposes. Hitherto it has run to waste, lacking a proper system of conservation and distribution. A great and generous increase of population would result in the extension of this system, so that what was formerly regarded as unredeemable land might become rich and productive country. For the natural wealth of the country is almost illimitable.

Thus the miracle. Now for the prediction.

What will be the future of the great Golden West—that immense area of nearly one million square miles which comprises Western Australia? The question is inevitable, and it is of surpassing interest, not only to Australia, but to the entire Empire. A study of the map should convince any reasonable person that this “front door to Australia” is of no ordinary importance in the plan of Empire development. Vast coloured populations lie almost at this door. Facing the north and north-west are the millions of Java and Borneo and the islands, while India is but ten days’ steaming from the port of Fremantle. Beyond, in the north, lie four hundred millions of Chinese. With a discontented India, an awakening China, an overcrowded and ambitious Japan—all near at hand—the question, What will be the future of the Golden West? assumes a new and serious importance.

Let us consider the land to begin with. It is the

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“giant of the Australian States,” containing the vastest area and the smallest population (I am not including Tasmania). Until recently it has been largely neglected by the other States and by the rest of the world. For many years it lay stagnant, until the gold boom brought it into prominence. That immense “desert” which lies between Perth and Port Augusta has acted as a barrier between the inhabitants of Western Australia and those of other States. The coming of the railway, however, will change all that.

The future of the country, commercially, may be deduced from the story of the past. During the last few years what was practically a desert has become a garden. A mere handful of people have wrought the change. Silently, and without advertisement, plough and drill have been at work with amazing results. During the last twenty-two years—from 1890 to 1912—the population has grown from 46,290 to 304,627. When every allowance has been made for immigration and emigration—for the ebb and flow have been continuous—the natural growth in the way of births has been excellent and above the average. Yet the total population at present is ridiculous for so vast a territory. In the United Kingdom there are 370 persons to the square mile; in Western Australia there is one person to three square miles. It is evident that a great increase of population must take place before it is necessary to speak of overcrowding! This small population has really accomplished wonderful things. It has created a number of industries,

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all of which are capable of almost indefinite extension. It has cleared thousands of acres of "scrub," and converted them into orchards and wheatfields. It has carried through, at a cost of over three millions sterling, one of the most successful schemes for pumping water. It has built a harbour at Fremantle at a cost of a million pounds. It has erected some noble buildings. It has established a splendid system of education. It is obvious that for such enterprises to have been conceived and consummated the natural wealth of the country is enormous. The people bear a heavy taxation with great cheerfulness. They can well afford it, and withal, as is shown by the figures I have previously cited, they are very thrifty, in the aggregate having saved some millions of money.

The total revenue of the State for the year 1890—the year before the gold boom—was £414,314. In 1912 it was £3,966,674.

The past achievements are a prophecy of future success. Professor Lowrie prepared two years ago certain estimates of the agricultural possibilities of the south-western part of the State. He predicted that in two decades the yield of wheat could be easily three times what it is at present; the yield of barley four times as much; the yield of oats seventy times as much; the yield of fruit fifteen times as much; the yield of potatoes twenty times as much; and the yield of dairy produce fourteen times as much; while sheep could be increased by 100 per cent. And this, remember, is an estimate for one part only of the State.

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In the north-eastern part of the State the climate is tropical. It is capable of bearing an enormous amount of stock and timber, while almost any kind of luxurious vegetation can flourish under the generous heat of the sun. Tropical fruits also can be grown in profusion. A large trade is now done in pearl fishing, and this, too, can be increased; while in certain places the turtle abounds. The turtle industry is capable of great extension. One can imagine even a M. Louis de Rougemont quite contented with the size of these strange creatures. Fishing, pearling, and turtling offer great openings. All kinds of citrus fruits flourish in the State, together with the Smyrna fig, which reaches a state of perfection.

The commercial value of timber in this Golden West is enormous. The sandal wood grows in the north, and the jarrah hard wood in abundance everywhere. In other States there has been a cruel and wicked waste of valuable timber. The beautiful blackwood has been thrown in hundreds of tons to the flames; it "did not pay" to remove it to the coast. Surely Western Australia will never repeat this supreme folly! I have heard a whisper that some valuable ebony has been recently found in an out-of-the-way corner, but inquiries concerning it have elicited only the vaguest information.

What, then, with agriculture, gold mining, general minerals—including coal—pearling, fishing, timber, turtles, and fruit, the State has a reserve of wealth beyond the dreams of avarice.

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Water is always a difficulty in a country like this. Heaven is generous in its bountiful supplies of rain and springs, but man has not yet been wise enough to treasure the gifts so lavishly sent. There are rivers hundreds of miles long which have yet to be utilised for the necessary work of irrigation. Already the West, by its provision of water for the arid gold-fields, has shown what can be done in the way of using to the best advantage the natural supplies which are confined to certain areas. And this country of young people, with the success of Coolgardie under its eyes, will know how to confer a like benefit upon other districts. With the practice of complete irrigation, the success of the country, agriculturally, is assured.

Passing from commerce to education, there is great promise for the West. Primary education is compulsory and free. The curriculum includes Nature study and practical instruction in such arts and crafts as will need to be practised by youths and maidens whose lot is cast, not in dense manufacturing centres, but in the midst of a laughing and fertile Nature. The education department provides systematic medical examination for all State school children. It is gratifying to observe how the best models are being followed in Australian education. There may be less of the academic polish associated with our English schools, but the pupils, when they leave the hands of their masters, will, at least, know sufficient to enable them to gain an honest living in a practical manner. For teachers, free education is

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given at the training colleges, together with board, when necessary, and pocket money. Nearly every child living near the coast, or in the vicinity of a river, can swim. In the summer-time children practically live in the water.

That there should be a wonderful future for the great West no reasonable man can doubt. But before that future can be assured the people must be possessed of higher ideals than those associated with money-making and pleasure-seeking. The foundations of a nation must be moral and religious, or it can be certain of nothing worthy of its true life. The obstacles to the laying of such foundations will be considered in due course.

CHAPTER IV

ADELAIDE, THE QUEEN CITY OF AUSTRALIA

No person could desire a better introduction to Australia than that which the city of Adelaide affords. It is the port where passengers, weary of the long sea voyage from England, disembark, to entrain for Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane. Adelaide is a true garden city on an extensive scale. Less compact, and containing fewer noble buildings than Melbourne, it excels that city in the beauty of its situation and in the ample verdure which everywhere abounds. Around it, guarding it, lies a ring of mountains. From one point of view the situation resembles certain parts of the Jura. There is the same immense stretch of plain, crowned with tree-clad slopes. From the highest point of the city a ravishing view of the country is obtained. The city at one's feet is less a city than an immense countryside, where men have built houses and mansions, and where they transact business. No need for artist or architect to write "Amplius" over the natural picture. The streets are remarkably wide—wider than any we have in London—and they are planned with a view to development. However much Adelaide may grow, there cannot be, so far as municipal foresight may

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guarantee it, the creation of slums. Whatever slums appear in the future will be due to men with base souls and not to municipal bungling, as in the case of many of our English towns and cities. If London had only been planned upon some such model as Adelaide, it might be a paradise of God for residence. Gardens! Gardens everywhere. Bungalows! Bungalows everywhere. The bungalow, or the villa, as they call it in Adelaide, is the prevailing type of residence. Everything on one floor. Think of it, housewives who live in "basement" houses, dull and dimly lighted. The veranda encloses the house; to nearly every residence there is a garden. Wandering along the residential part of the city is not unlike an excursion into the country. But how shall I describe the gardens? They are sub-tropical. There grow in them, in the heart of Adelaide, the eucalyptus tree, the banana tree, the orange and the lemon trees, the palm-tree, and the passion fruit vine. And in the midst of these surroundings, made still more gladsome by a perfect atmosphere, I think of grimy London and its fogs, and wish that the central city of the world might share the delights of a city which knows not the meaning of a fog and which unites city and country in a perfect blend.

One of the glories of suburban Adelaide consists in its wealth of fruit orchards. Oranges and lemons grow in profusion. In the suburbs every little cottage garden has its orange and lemon trees. A friend of mine, who has just bought a modest villa outside the city, finds himself in possession of a garden which

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is stocked with vines, lemons, and oranges. He has so much fruit that he does not know what to do with it. I undertook a part solution of this delicate problem, and showed him a way out of his distress—to my advantage. The house, which is surrounded by this beautiful fruit garden, would be rented in England, in a town equal in size to Adelaide, at a sum not exceeding £35 per annum. Think of a house, with such delicacies as Muscat grapes and citrons *ad lib.* thrown in, and all for £35 a year!

The South Australian oranges are admittedly amongst the very finest produced in the Commonwealth. The famous “navels” have no superior in the world, if they have an equal. In London they fetch, retail, 4d. and 5d. each. Even in Adelaide they sell at 1½d. and 2d. each, retail. But there is all the difference imaginable between these “navels,” freshly plucked from the tree when ripe, and the “navels” which, gathered when green, ripen on the way home. To understand the attractiveness of an orange, the fruit must be eaten when it is just ripe and newly plucked from the branch.

The orange groves in “Paradise” (a suburb of Adelaide—well-named) are spectacles to remember. We were conducted over one of the largest of these by the proprietor himself. The story of this gentleman’s career and success sounds like a romance. Twenty years ago he left Manchester for Australia to try to better his position. He had little or no capital. In company with his brother, he went up country, acquired a little land, and the pair set to

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work to make it productive. In their case there was conscience in the work. No days allowed off for drinking; no limitation of the hours of labour; the brothers worked as hard as they could, in the belief that work "pays" in the best sense. When the profits came in they invested them in more land. Nothing was spent upon luxuries; nothing upon pleasures. For seven years the brothers lived in tents, thus saving the cost of building a house. There was little hardship, however, in that mode of life. In a warm country it is better to live outside than inside the house. Houses are merely places of refuge when the weather is bad; the "open" is the true place of abode. After a period of work up country one of the brothers came down to Adelaide and bought a piece of land measuring seventy or eighty acres. To-day that estate is one magnificent fruit orchard. Five thousand orange trees grow thereon, and each tree averages from 800 to 1,000 oranges per season. Besides this there are many lemon trees, extensive vines, peach, apricot, and apple trees, to say nothing of ten thousand orange "slips" which are already sold, and which will in due time be planted out all over the district.

The appearance of an immense orange grove of this extent is very impressive. Avenues of trees, all laden with golden fruit, run in every direction. Under the light of an afternoon sun the general effect is wonderful. The orchard becomes an enchanted garden, over which some generous genius presides. Trees only a few years old literally groan under the

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weight of fruit. Often the branches are entirely hidden, so thickly packed are the oranges. A visitor who views the spectacle for the first time is apt to imagine that in such a Garden of Eden the fruit would be ever welcome. He is surprised to learn that the men who live in the midst of it loathe it. They never taste an orange. Familiarity with the golden globe has bred contempt for it. It is regarded merely as a marketable commodity. The orange is no longer succulent fruit for personal consumption; it is an edible sphere which can be exchanged for money. So the enchanted garden becomes a place of commerce.

The orange and the lemon, we were told, are shy and delicate trees in their early years. They need much humouring and much attention. But when once established they fulfil their own destiny. The *doyen* of the orchard is a tree sixty years old. It still bears fruit, but of an ever inferior quality. Few leaves are seen upon this tall stalwart. The tree resembles an erect colonel whose fighting days are over and upon whose head bald patches have come. It lives upon its pension. The owner has not the heart to cut it down. It remains, amid the forest, the one favoured tree, spared because it is the parent of these prosperous golden children.

The orange tree is singular in one particular: it lives through all the seasons of the year at one time. Upon the same tree, blossom, bud, green fruit and yellow fruit flourish together. The round of growth is perpetual.

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There comes a time when the orange blossom puts forth the full strength of its magic perfume. When a man owns but one orange tree the scent is penetrating, fragrant, grateful, satisfying. But when 5,000 trees pour forth their fragrance at one time the effect is terrible. The perfume is as intangible and oppressive as a nightmare. The air is heavy with an all-pervasive odour which weighs upon the brain and makes it ache. The vast garden celebrates its nuptials, and every orange tree is smothered with blossom. Burdened with this atmosphere of perfume, man learns that Nature can crush with her excess of sweetness as well as smite with her fist of mail.

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South Australia seems as if it might become the home of the orange. The soil is ferruginous, and admirably adapted to the culture of the golden fruit. An amazing example of what is possible is supplied by the case of Renmark. Twenty years ago the site of this town, situated at one elbow of the River Murray, was an apparently hopeless desert. It seemed to be abandoned to sterility. To-day it is a flourishing irrigation colony, where all manner of fruit is grown. Renmark oranges, currants, and raisins are becoming famous. They have already found their way to many London tables. In twelve years the value of the produce has risen from £6,878 to £78,000. And the miracle of conquering the desert has been wrought solely by scientific culture. Irrigation has been the magician. When all the

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"deserts" of the Commonwealth are treated after the manner of Renmark, Australia will become the fruit garden of the world.

South Australia is a veritable paradise of fruit; besides the orange there are miles of peaches, pears, grapes, figs, and apples. We saw the largest mulberry-tree in Australia, if not in the world. This giant tree sheds thousands of rich, ripe berries, which lie where they fall, dyeing the soil with their red juices, and rotting on the ground for want of gatherers. I heard with astonishment that it "does not pay" to gather this fruit. The wages demanded by boys are too high to make it worth while to employ them, while the employment of men is, of course, simply out of the question. The peaches beggar description. I plucked one at hazard, and found that it weighed ten and a half ounces and measured ten and a quarter inches in circumference. It will be readily believed that in those parts people do not buy peaches by the pound! The big peach may be matched with a big fish story. A round dozen of us went out for a day's fishing from the pier at Semaphore. In advance we promised to divide our spoils upon our return. Alas! we caught no fish; but we caught what we had not bargained for, but what was worth catching—*seven sharks*. It was a novel experience. How those creatures fought! The larger ones had to be shot when they were drawn to the surface, or they could not have been landed. Two of them had the heads of huge bulldogs; one was a "hammer-head" shark. When they lay dead upon

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the deck we examined their jaws. The teeth were like steel rivets for strength and orderly array. Rows of cruel teeth lined the jaws. Beyond, the throat was smooth as velvet. Little wonder that, with these ocean pirates roaming about, we failed to catch our schnapper.

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The story of the beautiful city of Adelaide and its fruitful environs is a veritable romance. A few decades ago the entire country was "bush," abandoned to the natives, of men, bird, and beast. Then one day, in 1836, at Glenelg, under the branches of a gum tree, the State of South Australia was proclaimed. From that moment on, the story has been one of ever-increasing prosperity. The founders of the city deserve every commendation for their admirable foresight. Unlike Sydney, which has "grown," Adelaide was deliberately planned as a "garden city," long before the days when it became fashionable to speak of garden cities. The park lands which encircle the capital will remain for ever the pleasure grounds of the people. Never can speculative builders cut up this beautiful property and convert it into rows of cheap and ugly houses. Adelaide will have to the end of time "lungs" unexcelled by any city in the world. It is a model of town planning. The streets are all wide, and are flanked by avenues of trees. The public buildings are imposing and substantial. The climate is nearly perfect. The only unpleasant elements are certain days of intense

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heat and dust storms. The heat, however, is "dry," and therefore more supportable than that of more humid climates. The air is light, while the ring of mountains around the city completes the charm of an ideal situation. And the simple fact that South Australia has the second lowest death-rate in the world speaks volumes. When transit between South Australia and England has become more rapid, and better methods of conveying delicate fruit have been invented, the unique fruit of South Australia should be put upon the English market at prices accessible to all.

CHAPTER V

THE ROMANCE OF MELBOURNE

WHAT the over-learned but fascinating Burton, in his "Anatomy of Melancholy," wrote of Australia, nearly three centuries ago, remains true for vast numbers of people in the Old Country to-day—it is a *terra Australis incognita*. It is not to the credit of Britons that they know so little of the outlying parts of their great Empire. Doubtless things have advanced since the day when a London lady said to a prominent cleric who was leaving England for Melbourne, "So you are going to preach to the aborigines!" (Poor aborigines—there are very few of them left. Civilisation is killing them with its manners, as formerly it murdered them with its guns.) In the remarkable official "Commonwealth Year-Book" there is contained a series of maps showing the progress of Australian exploration during the last century. It is a suggestive study. In 1808 the map was one black mass, indicating ignorance of the continent, with a white corner in Victoria, showing the one place known to explorers. At the end of each decade the maps grow lighter, until the final one published contains only a few black patches indicating the unexplored country of the great central desert and of the

The Romance of Melbourne

north-west territory. It is only by comparing the first and the last maps that the marvellous advance in Australian exploration becomes manifest. What will the next hundred years bring? The first hundred years have seen the country opened up to knowledge. Will the second hundred years see it filled with a happy and prosperous population?

It seems hardly credible to one who gazes in admiration at the beautiful modern buildings of Melbourne that less than eighty years ago there was no vestige of a city there. And it is even more incredible, in view of the ever-extending suburbs of the city, that sixty years ago a plot of ground at the top of Collins Street was rejected by a church on the ground that it was "too far in the bush." What miracles in stones and streets have been wrought since then!

At an anniversary dinner in Melbourne recently there was distributed, as a precious souvenir of the growth of the city, a lithographed copy of the first agreement made between John Batman and the native chiefs as to the transfer of an enormous tract of land upon which the Port Philip settlement was subsequently built. It was a bargain of the rarest and keenest kind. Little did the chiefs dream, on that memorable day, what their simple act would involve. For a quantity of knives, scissors, mirrors, blankets, and other ordinary articles beloved of the natives, the chiefs agreed to part with no less than 600,000 acres of rich, grassy land. It was probably the cheapest bargain ever made in the way of land

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purchase, if we except the sharp-witted gentlemen at home who boldly seized common land as their own without so much as the payment of a pocket-knife or a pair of scissors.

It was not Batman, however, despite his bargain, who was the real founder of Melbourne. His cheap purchase was speedily disputed by other Englishmen, who also had great dreams of property. When Pascoe Fawcner sailed from Tasmania, and after various trials landed on the site where Melbourne now stands, his fellow-colonists established themselves on the vacant ground, and thus Melbourne was founded. Various relics of wooden houses still exist to show what primitive colonial life was in those days. There are many old folks residing in Melbourne who have weird stories to tell of the life in that distant time. How they came out sixty years ago in sailing vessels, the voyage occupying several months; how they sat with their fathers and mothers on the ground, for want of better accommodation; how they slept in the bush covered with cloaks and skins, and surrounded by laughing jackasses, which seemed to make merry over their misfortunes; how men rapidly rose to fortune, and sank as rapidly as they had risen; how they have watched the growth of the great city from a collection of huts and wooden shanties, until it has become one of the fine cities of the world. Romance! It is not too highly coloured a word by which to describe their experiences.

History does not record many more rapid develop-

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ments than that of Melbourne. In sixty years its population has grown from 11,000 to over 600,000, and the end is not yet. Like all growing children, it has had its illnesses and set-backs. The "land boom" of 1892-3 ruined many men who accounted their fortune as firmly settled. Some unfortunates, in that dreadful crisis brought on by dishonest speculation, lost their reason and went down to a suicide's grave. On one black day men who until that hour were sane and sober went mad and raved and cursed. Some church folk said what they meant to be their farewell to God on that mad day. But time is a wonderful healer, and the sun aids time. This bright and cheerful atmosphere is inimical to pessimism. The laughing sun and trees and flowers, and the song-filled air, made men forget their failure. Melbourne has recovered from its stroke. Some of the most optimistic and exhilarating men I have encountered in this city are men who lost their all in the "crash."

As a city Melbourne is a wonderfully attractive place. Its great and unmistakable feature is airiness. Many of the streets are of a width that would prepare for some English landowners a fit of apoplexy were they compelled to build streets on their property upon such an ample scale. Everything is light, bright, airy, ample. Few people live in the city itself. Collins Street is the home of doctors, who congregate together as do members of the same fraternity in Harley Street, London. In the suburbs, near and distant—and residentially Melbourne is "going out"

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farther and farther—all the houses are ample. The “villa” is evidently the favourite type of house, and is affected by rich and poor. A villa is the Melbourne name for a bungalow. All the rooms are on one floor. Housework is reduced to the minimum. A villa of the largest size is little less than a mansion, while the smallest villas present an air of smartness and comfort which a basement house entirely lacks. In fact, the “basement” house is unknown in Australia. It would not be tolerated. The villa is ideal for a hot country, where people are not inclined to waste energy on summer days in climbing flights of unnecessary stairs. Nearly every house has its bit of sub-tropical shrubbery, if nothing else. The nearer suburbs have none too much garden attaching to the houses. This, for a new country, is a great mistake. With ample land to spare, the State might have planned nearer Melbourne on the garden city principle. Adelaide is a better city from this point of view. In fact, Adelaide is the finest city, from the garden point of view, I have ever seen. But in the farther suburbs Melbourne is more rural. Kew, Armadale, Canterbury, and Surrey Hills are delightful residential places. The spaces allotted to gardens are there more ample, and the general effect is more pleasing.

The new-comer from the Old Land is struck by the way in which familiar names reappear in the various localities. English names are duplicated in a delightfully confusing manner. Thus, on one short railway run to the suburbs we pass through Rich-

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mond, Windsor, Camberwell, Brighton, Canterbury, Surrey Hills, Sandringham, Hampton, Kensington, and Newmarket. It sounds so familiar, yet it is so odd that the names appear in anything but their original order. It is not too much to say that the suburbs of Melbourne are more attractive than the suburbs of any English city of corresponding size. The absence of smoke, the absolute clearness of the atmosphere, the ranges of mountains, the sea in the distance, and the vast distances carpeted with green combine to form a landscape second to none in the world. Melbourne seems to be central for every kind of life. A threepenny ticket from the centre brings one to the shore of St. Kilda. A shilling is the price of a return ticket to Black Rock, a romantic seaside resort on the verge of the bush, where laughing jackasses gather in threes and fours and guffaw their loudest. All around is a vast dairying district, while at Healesville and in the Buffalo Mountains there are pleasure centres unapproachable for beauty and romance.

The city proper is a "chessboard city," built on strict mathematical lines. The streets intersect each other at right angles. There is no place easier to traverse. Built as it is, however, many of the streets have no shade whatever in the summer-time. That is their one disadvantage. There are numerous magnificent buildings. The Houses of Parliament, the General Post Office, the Exhibition Building and the Town Hall are worthy of the best city in any country. Situated in such a latitude, Melbourne lends itself

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admirably to boulevard life. A touch of Paris would make of Melbourne the most attractive city in this hemisphere. The streets and pavements are wide enough to allow of the open-air café. But in its life Melbourne follows America rather than Paris. The American hustling spirit is manifest in everything, religion included. Already, in this new country, the trend of the people is towards the city. Victoria has an area of 87,884 square miles; that is, its territory is half as big again as England and Wales. Its population is only 1,399,325—about one thirty-fifth that of Britain. Yet of that population 600,000 people live in Melbourne and its suburbs.

One thing strangely fascinates a new-comer, and that is the question of lung disease. It was to Australia that consumptive patients were formerly sent; it is to Davos they now repair. Once it was thought that a warm climate was better for the patients; now it is thought that cold, dry air is the best for them. The last official figures are significant. In the year 1906 the home death-rate from tuberculosis of the respiratory system was 135.68 per 100,000 of the population. In 1907 the death-rate for the whole Commonwealth of Australia was 86.29 per 100,000—little more than half. "The Commonwealth occupies, therefore, a very enviable position in regard to tubercular diseases, when compared with European countries." Yet even this proportion is too high. Consumptive patients who went out years ago are now living at a good old age, but some of their children have been carried off by the dread disease.

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One man, in a good position, buried his seventh and last child a short time ago. He himself came out weak-lunged forty years ago. Good luck to the physicians who are fighting the white scourge! One day it ought to disappear entirely from a country so broad and healthy as this.

CHAPTER VI

THE BEAUTY OF SYDNEY

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON, who knew and loved the Southern Pacific, declared that he loved Sydney "for its bits of old London and Paris." That sentence raises the veil, and reveals to the stranger one of the chief characteristics of Sydney. "It is so English!" is the exclamation of all Britons who see it for the first time. Its English-like character is at once its charm and its drawback. Its charm, for it transports the visitor immediately to the Old Country; its drawback, for it is not at all Australian, as are the other capitals of the Commonwealth. After Perth, Adelaide, and Melbourne, with their abnormally spacious thoroughfares, Sydney streets appear too narrow for the climate. Day after day I have stood in George Street and imagined myself to be in Manchester or Liverpool or some other English city. In the heart of Sydney it is difficult to realise that one is really in Australia. To me they appear to be disadvantageous—these narrow streets; to others they appear to be a great boon, especially in the summer-time, when they afford some little shadow from the great heat of the sun.

The architectural mistakes of the early builders

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of Sydney are now being repaired—in truth, the city is in process of rebuilding. Entire districts of inferior buildings have been sponged out. In their place new and noble erections are rising. More than five millions of pounds sterling have been spent in city buildings since the year 1907. One day Sydney will wear a new aspect, and become as Australian in appearance as it is now in spirit. Perhaps the most remarkable thing about Sydney to-day is the boom in building that has been in progress during the last few years. According to official statements, the amount spent in building in Sydney and suburbs during the last four years exceeds sixteen millions of pounds sterling. This includes city buildings, suburban buildings, State Government buildings, schools, etc. It is a prodigious sum of money. Practically a new suburb is being added to the city every year. The State is greatly prospering commercially; indeed, it has never been more prosperous. Everybody seems to have plenty of money to spend. The rapid building of houses is not due to speculation, but to genuine investment on the part of people who desire to purchase their own houses. The splendid municipal electric car system has linked up all the suburbs, and has thus contributed largely towards the general prosperity of the city. With the memory of the great land boom in Melbourne, one is at first disposed to ask whether this prosperity is as genuine as it appears to be upon the surface. It is assuring to learn from the Government Commissioner that “this prosperity is not ephemeral, and that even

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should the State be visited by serious drought conditions there would be no marked effect in the building trade for some years to come."

There exists, without doubt, a certain degree of jealousy between the cities of Melbourne and Sydney. Sydney is the older city, and it is perhaps natural that her children should claim for her the superiority due to age. For my part, I do not interfere in these quarrels and jealousies. I smile at both parties, and point out the excellent qualities possessed by each city—Melbourne, every time, for ample thoroughfares, push, and American hustling; Sydney, for narrower streets and a more English type of life, and, above all, for unexcelled natural beauty. Melbourne has been deliberately made upon a definite plan. Sydney has grown as a tree grows; hence some of its branches are long and some are short. There is an immense difference between the two cities, but both are places of great importance. A century hence (unless, through sheer wicked indolence, a white population of British settlers not having been encouraged, the country is in the hands of one of the yellow races) Sydney and Melbourne may be a twin London.

If there exists in any part of the world a finer train than the express between Melbourne and Sydney, I have yet to hear of it. With observation car, dining and sleeping saloons, it represents the last word in luxury. There is only one drawback attached to it—the journey is not continuous in the one train. On the border of New South Wales passengers change

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trains, owing to the difference in the gauges of the two railway lines. This inconvenience is the heritage which early stupidity has bequeathed to the present generation. Years ago, before the Federation, the States were opposed to each other, even to the extent of constructing railway lines of a different gauge. To remedy this folly will be a costly piece of work. Just one little town on the route awakens my interest and recalls a famous episode. It is the town of Wagga Wagga. When the name is called out, instantly the Tichborne trial comes to mind. For it is in this remote, scarcely known town that Arthur Orton, the claimant, traded as a butcher. Here came to him the newspaper containing the advertisement for the heir to the Tichborne estates. And here was hatched in the butcher's brain the little plot which ultimately sent him to penal servitude. Who could have imagined that from this hidden spot in the Australian bush there would issue an influence sufficiently strong to agitate the entire British nation?

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The approach to Sydney by rail is unpromising. It is only when the city is traversed, and the visitor is out upon the water, that the unparalleled beauty of the situation of Sydney is realised. It is easy, then, to understand why Sydney folk are proud of their harbour. There is nothing exactly like it in the whole world. I had always conceived the harbour as an immense circle, or semi-circle, of water, flanked by hills and houses. Instead of that, I found it to be

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a series of a hundred little harbours, formed in the most surprising manner, and consisting altogether of a frontage of two hundred miles. A natural harbour, it has the commercial advantages of an artificial one, for the water is deep, often fathoms deep, to the very edge. Thus the great liners of the Orient, P. and O., North German Lloyd, and other lines are berthed at the quays. One first rapid glance at the harbour near the quays gives the impression of a great maritime centre where boats flying all flags find refuge. There is a forest of funnels, a vast array of floating iron and steel.

The shipping out of sight, the remainder of the harbour is a panorama of natural beauty, of which thousands have taken advantage. All the slopes and all the heights are crowded with residences, large or small. In the more modest quarters the houses are small, but always picturesque. In the wealthier parts we are confronted with a series of small palaces. Picture Clovelly, Ilfracombe, Lynton, and Lynmouth all placed together, and united by a number of harbour inlets, and there you have an image of Sydney Harbour. To this add a sentimental touch of Italian life—the balcony—and the picture is complete, when the area of the whole is extended to embrace the frontage of 200 miles. The balconies! If I were to select the chief charm of these houses built upon the edge of the water, it would be, without the least hesitation, the balconies. Their variety is astonishing. No two are alike. Every house is a fresh surprise. It would seem as if architects and builders

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had exhausted all possible combinations of wood and stone for the production of the last word in picturesque effects. The gardens of these houses slope right down to the water's edge. And what gardens! Is there any spot upon earth where so many roses are gathered together as at Sydney? Roses everywhere, whole bowers of them. Gardens ablaze with roses of every colour! We step into one garden belonging to a pastor of the city and find ourselves in a perfect paradise of flowers. Walls covered with trailing roses. Garden path lined with roses. Flower beds one mass of roses. Thousands of them! It is a unique spectacle. Sydney might add to its industries, if it has not already done so, that of preparing the attar of roses.

Nobody ever wearies of the harbour. In the early morning, or at noon, or late at night the charm, ever varying, never fails to hold the visitor. The craft upon the water in the daytime, the million twinkling lights at night, conquer the beholder. Every excursion discloses some new beauty. On the north side of the harbour a great and important town has sprung up. At every other bend in the road a vision of the water appears. Built upon a hill, or a series of hills, the whole northern suburb gathers to the harbour. Magnificent residences are rising every week. All is quiet, retired, attractive, and yet a brief ferry ride brings one to the Circular Quay, the heart of a throbbing business life. Retirement and bustle are but a stone's throw from each other. On one side of the harbour are yachts, terraced houses, splashes of

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red-roofed houses nestling amongst masses of green shrub and tree and garden ; on the other side, within coo-ee of the yachts, mammoth ocean liners lie, awaiting the moment of departure for East and West. This combination of suburbia and shipping very rarely exists in the world. Shipping generally means long lines of quays and docks removed from the residential quarters of the city. Here in Sydney, suburbia, on both sides of the harbour, looks down at the ever-expanding mass of shipping on the quays and in the coves. Even the largest steamers are moored near the Circular Quay, within a few minutes' walk of the heart of the city.

Many of the larger houses have their own enclosed sea baths, built of stone, and admitting the water through a netted grill. It is impossible to bathe in the open harbour on account of the sharks which abound. The grill admits the water into the private bath, but excludes the sharks. The wretched creatures, however, often haunt the vicinity of these baths, in the hope of surprising a dainty human morsel. A novice experiences strange and uncanny sensations when, taking his modest dip, he sees the snout of a hungry shark thrust against the grill. If that grill gave way!!! The harbour is dotted with numerous suburbs, most of which are pleasure resorts. Of these Manly beach is said to be the best ; it is the home of surf bathers. There is a magnificent service of ferry boats and electric trams running to every nook and corner in the harbour. And the fares are surprisingly low. It is not difficult to understand

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how, on a sultry summer evening, when the city is stifling, Sydney abandons itself to an aquatic life. And the harbour explains the pleasure spirit which dominates Sydney. A journalist who visited Australia a few years ago, declared that Adelaide was the city of culture, Melbourne the city of business, and Sydney the city of pleasure. It is altogether too sweeping a summary. There is culture and business in Sydney, as elsewhere. But to a visitor the pleasure element seems to be dominant. It certainly is so at night time, on holidays, and especially on Sundays. The harbour is alive with craft on Sundays. Far, far more people are out bent on pleasure than are ever found in the churches. Religious work is not easy in Sydney. The churches have to compete with the harbour. There are no old Church traditions to bind the young people as "at home." Young people, for the most part, do as they like. From the spectacular point of view it is striking and attractive, this wooing of the harbour. From the moral point of view it is disquieting, for it means that a generation is arising which knows neither the form nor the force of religion. And this for a young nation is a serious menace.

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Under the gleam of the midday sun in spring, when the blinding light of the sun is softened by the kiss of the green leaves of thousands of trees, Sydney Harbour is a paradise of beauty. When night falls and the city is illuminated with artificial light, the

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harbour is a dream of romance. We had the happiness of seeing the harbour under the light of the full moon. This, together with the half-million lights from city and steamer and home which danced upon the waters, transported us into fairyland. Darting from one side to the other were the ferry-boats, ablaze with electric light. Lying at the quays were the great liners, studded with stars. And all the lights of harbour, of city and suburbs were multiplied a hundredfold in these waters already made silvern by the beams of the moon. It was a sight never to be forgotten.

For those who love the country, with its broad spaces and its incomparable perfume, the environs of Sydney offer endless attractions. First of all there are the Blue Mountains, with their awesome precipices, cascades, and gum-tree-covered slopes, and the famous Jenolan Caves, an enchanted world of stalactite, fashioned into every kind of fantastic shape. Within an hour of the capital is the vast area of the National Park, covering over 30,000 acres; and, beautiful as any of them, the Hawkesbury river. The railway route to the Hawkesbury passes through lovely scenery. Within an hour of Sydney this "Rhine of Australia" is reached. There is also a touch of Norway—just a touch—in the waterways which run inland like miniature fiords. On the banks of the Hawkesbury, cottages and bungalows are being multiplied, to be occupied by the business men of the capital, who find here a retreat from the bustle of the city.

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Sydney is nearer, by 500 miles, to the tropics than Melbourne. Life lived on the verge of the tropical region is not marked by the same strenuousness as that of a more rigorous climate. And Melbourne is a little more rigorous than Sydney, especially in the winter-time. In Sydney there is only a difference of 17 degrees between the average temperatures of winter and summer. The climate is wonderful, Sicilian in its softness. In Melbourne they pass in an hour from midsummer to midwinter. Perhaps this is why Melbourne is more strenuous than Sydney. But, *chacun à son goût*. Sydney people believe their city to be the best in the world, and nothing will ever convince them to the contrary. There is no need to quarrel about it.

CHAPTER VII

AT BOTANY BAY

YEARS ago the Christy Minstrels sang a droll song about the adventures of a Chinaman in Botany Bay. London audiences rocked with laughter at the mention of the famous convict settlement. Had they better understood all that was meant by Botany Bay they might well have wept.

Fresh from reading the story of Capain Cook's travels, and the subsequent story of the penal life in New South Wales, I find myself in an excellent mood to appreciate a visit to the famous spot which is known as the birthplace of Australian history. We go to Sydney upon a fine Inter-state steamer, the *Karoola*, a boat that for sheer comfort, deck space, saloon and table compares well with the mail liners.

The entry into Sydney Harbour in the early morning is an event to be remembered. There is no other place on earth exactly like this famous harbour. Its innumerable windings offer a fascinating panorama to the visitor who has the advantage of a position on the upper deck of a mail steamer. Sydney does homage to its harbour. The city crowds to the water's edge. The new suburbs on the northern side are growing at a rapid rate, and soon there will be no

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plot of land unoccupied. It is difficult to believe that less than a century ago the "bush" came to the edge of the harbour. Where now maritime life reigns, there was formerly a desolation or a wildness which well harmonised with a country still in the possession of the aborigines. The few pictures extant of Sydney Harbour as it was form the best measure of the progress that has since been made.

Botany Bay is eclipsed by Port Jackson. It is the Plymouth Rock of Australia, yet it is not to Australians what Plymouth Rock is to Americans. The present generation "knows not Joseph"—or, rather, James. Captain Cook is, for the many, a mere name; he does not represent, nor evoke, an enthusiasm. One day, when Australia has grown to the dimensions of America, there will be a Cook cult, and Botany Bay will become a shrine. To-day it is merely a place for picnics; an easy lounge from Sydney for persons who have neither historic nor national imagination.

A fourpenny tram ticket from Circular Quay takes one to the village of Botany. Thence a steamer crosses the bay, calls in at La Perouse, and deposits its passengers at the famous spot where, on April 28, 1770, Captain Cook landed from his toy boat, the *Endeavour*. There is little to see: a large rock, a small jetty, and a monument. The latter—an obelisk—is enclosed within chains. It was erected by the Hon. Thomas Holt. Of Cook monuments and inscriptions there are many. Yet there is only one statue of Cook himself, and that is in Hyde Park,

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Sydney. The intrepid explorer is depicted with right hand extended, while in his left hand he carries the chart of his voyage. Wherever Captain Cook's feet trod there the memorialist has certified the fact in a permanent manner. Upon the face of the cliffs at Kurnell, Botany Bay, an inscription is found setting forth the fact that :

"Under the auspices of British Science these Shores were discovered by James Cook and Joseph Banks, the Columbus and Mæcenas of their time."

The final inscription appears on a tree in Hawaii, and sets forth the tragic fact that "near this spot fell Captain James Cook, the renowned circumnavigator." But, of course, I have not seen that.

A final monument alone is needed, and that is the *Endeavour* itself, or part of it. Alas ! this monument must remain unerected. Englishmen appreciated the *Victory*, and took care to preserve it for the nation, but the discovery of so insignificant a place as Australia passed without attracting the attention that it deserved. The men of that time had no prophetic gift of insight enabling them to see what the new country might yet mean to the Motherland, hence they allowed the *Endeavour* to become a whaler, to fly the French flag, and eventually to sink in the waters around Rhode Island. Thus America holds the famous four-hundred tonner to which the highest honour is attached. One day Australia may ask whether the *Endeavour* is so far sunk that it cannot

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be raised, if only in parts, and established in an Australian museum. . . .

Botany Bay compels thought and awakens imagination. Upon the pivot of that rock what events will yet turn? What was it that Captain Cook really discovered when he landed on Australian soil? Something more than a gold mine or a vast and fertile orchard. Suppose it should turn out to be the fact that he discovered a land which of all lands is best able, geographically and politically (when it is properly populated), to affect for good the fortunes of the awakening East and to relieve the distress of the congested West? The world has not yet appreciated what Australia is capable of both socially and politically.

As we look out over the waters from Botany Bay, the greatness of Captain Cook becomes a reality. Yonder is the illimitable stretch of the great Pacific Ocean. Nothing between us and America save this magnificent waste of waters. There our mother tongue is spoken. Beyond, are our own kin, the Canadians. And on the farther side of that great continent another stretch of waters, and then the Home Land itself. To the north of us India, to the west of us Africa. It is an immense circle of British interests, and we are in its centre. And to Captain Cook we owe it. When we think of that little barque of 368 tons venturing across the great oceans, we seem to be in the neighbourhood of miracle. The very least of beginnings; what will be the ending?

Turning our back on the ocean, and looking in-

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ward to the harbour and the city, the miracle seems to grow. There a million people live and work and grow wealthy. Everywhere the scrub disappears, the trees fall, and the soil yields its riches. And millions more of acres await men and machinery. Yet on that wonderful day in 1770 all that Captain Cook saw is expressed in his line from the log :—

“At day break we discovered a bay and anchored under the South Shore, about 2 miles from the Entrance, in six fathom water.”

“A bay.” Just a bay! How little did he dream of the wealth behind it all. Australia ought not to forget its first hero and explorer. Captain Cook should be more to it than a name; yet to the many it is only that.

But Botany Bay also makes us think gravely of the “bad old days.” England had a new possession in 1770, a vast continent of whose immense treasures she knew nothing. “Happy thought! let us turn it into a rubbish heap,” her leaders said. Mad and blind policy! But had we been there should we have done better? Should we—any better than they—have foreseen the development of our industrial system and the congested state of our great cities and towns? Had the gift of foresight been granted to the leaders of that great epoch, it is more than likely that the present industrial unrest “at home” would never have been created, for Australia would have been, long ago, a second home for the British nation,

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and not merely a big hole from which the swift and the strong dug out gold.

A dumping ground for criminals! That was the first use to which Britain put Australia. America was closed against her owing to the war of 1776. The English gaols were congested. Political offenders multiplied. "Justice" was little better than legal murder. For the most trivial offences men lost their lives, or were transported. The English Court was rotten. "Liberty" was a mere fiction. Those were the "good old times," of which our modern croakers—blind and deaf—never cease to babble. Botany Bay—the entrance to a new and golden world—was converted into a penal settlement. There came into it in the month of January, 1788, eleven vessels bearing a thousand convicts, and their wives and children. Seven weary months had those wretched people been upon the high seas. Those merciful days made no provision for the humanities. The convicts came out like cattle, and their drivers were worse than themselves. "Convicts"—but not necessarily criminals! Convicted by bad "laws," but often enough, in the sight of high heaven, guiltless of crime. They came out, high and low, bad and good, and were all dumped down at Botany Bay. Some undoubtedly were bad enough, and others were victims of political malice. When I read the story of that time my heart warms towards many of the convicts and hardens towards most of their masters. It was a cruel and brutal epoch. The story of early Sydney gives one gooseflesh at the reading. Some

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of the English "judges" sent out were drunken and cruel scoundrels, not fit to have the management of cattle, to say nothing of men. Hangings were general; human life was accounted of little value. Governor Philip was one of the worst of his class. A man without pity—a brute. And he went to church at times!

Here is the story of one of his merciful acts. A convict woman one day picked up in the street a small parcel. Taking it to a retired place she opened it and found it to contain a watch, a ring, and some money. At once she sought to restore it. But she was a mere convict, and she had committed the unpardonable offence of opening a parcel found in the street. The articles, it appeared, had been stolen, and the thief in fright had dropped the parcel in the street. The woman was tried by a jury of military men, who promptly sentenced her to death. She appealed to Governor Philip, who replied, "If you tell me the truth I will pardon you." In anguish the condemned woman cried, "As God is my witness I have told you the truth." To which the representative of Britain answered, "You shall stand before your God before the clock strikes nine to-morrow." And as Governor Philip drank his coffee at breakfast time on the next day, he had the joy of seeing the woman drop, strangled, from the cross-beam of the gallows.

Botany Bay!—gate of a new continent and ante-room of hell—your memories are at once bright and bloody. The nightmare and the stains have disappeared; the brightness remains. No more shall

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you witness the inhumanities of the past; the day of liberty and of justice has come. And when Australia has become one of the great nations of the world you will not be forgotten, for you first, on this soil, gave hospitality to Captain Cook.

CHAPTER VIII

BRISBANE, THE QUEEN CITY OF THE NORTH

FROM Victoria to Queensland is an ascent in many ways. To begin with, it means a railway journey of nearly thirteen hundred miles from south to north. Each mile brings one nearer the tropics. Each hour the heat grows more intense; each day the sky bluer and brighter. I travelled from Sydney by steamer and made the ascent by sea. Even then there was the experience of expansion; of greater warmth, and the first faint perfume of the Lotus land. I returned by railway, and thus completed the circuit.

The approach to Brisbane by sea creates a curious impression upon the Englishman who sees Queensland for the first time. The city unveils itself as an entirely foreign city. In the disposition of its houses, as well as in their style, there is something quite new. The roofs present a curious appearance. Their colour is drab, or grey, or white, the very colours which intensify the blinding light of a tropical climate. Tall palms raise their graceful heads to the sky. Strange plants and flowers and shrubs begin to appear. Conspicuous above everything else is the brilliant and majestic jackaranda tree. Imagine a young English elm tree, of ten years' growth, without

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a leaf upon its branches, but entirely covered, in place of leaf, with large thick blue flowers—that is the jackaranda. It is a tree of amazing beauty—a quaint flower, elevated to the dimensions of a tree. And with the spectacle of palm, jackaranda, camphor-tree, and banana, there also greets one a blend of subtle perfumes and spices. When the breeze springs up, one dominating, overpowering scent is borne upon its wings, and brain and mind are oppressed with its heaviness.

This approach to Brisbane by water is very beautiful and impressive. The steamer proceeds up a long and winding river decked on both sides with picturesque gardens and houses, and having for an ultimate background a line of dark, solemn-looking hills. The “city of villas” Brisbane undoubtedly is. One would hardly be surprised to behold at the wharf a population of coloured people. The foreign-looking houses, the tropical surroundings, the warm, voluptuous atmosphere, and this breath of spicy perfumes, together suggest the dreamy East. And one day there *will* be a population of coloured people in Brisbane, despite the fact that they will be British. For the sun, which respects the skin of none, is slowly bronzing the faces of the inhabitants. “A white Australia!” There can never be a pure white Northern Australia while residence continues and the sun retains its heat. The whitest man must, in course of time, become dark. Why complain of degrees of darkness; for what is black but bronze and duskiness brought to perfection?

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The houses of Brisbane have one striking peculiarity—they are built upon wooden piles, the highest of which stand perhaps five or six feet from the ground. The general effect is, to say the least, odd. It is Venice, without the lagoons. And the reason for this peculiarity is the presence of that terrible enemy, the white ant. The base of the piles is immersed in tar, while the crown is capped with a kind of inverted tin plate—a child's dinner-plate. And the piles themselves are often poisoned. Every precaution has to be taken against the ravages of the white ant. The tar discourages it at the base, the poisoned wood discourages it on the ascent, and the inverted plates foil it at the top. Within the houses similar precautions are taken. The legs of the tables are planted in double earthenware pots, so that the invader may be repulsed. For woe betide the householder who suffers a successful invasion of the white ant! The dreadful enemy is never seen; he works entirely in the dark. His presence is never suspected until the unhappy moment when the once solid piece of furniture suddenly collapses, a total wreck—silently but surely gnawed by the teeth of the concealed foe. Amazing stories are told of the devastation wrought by the white ant. Men out in the country have placed strong boxes in a secure place—secure, as they thought, and then, one day, presuming upon their supposed strength, they have essayed to use the boxes as seats, only to discover themselves suddenly precipitated to the ground, and mixed with the debris of the collapsed trunk. In a church in

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Brisbane one of the elders, when treading the aisles one day, thought he detected a slight softness in the floor under his feet. Pursuing his inquiries, he discovered, to his dismay, that the white ants had managed to gnaw their way into the floor, despite the fact that a mass of concrete lay between it and the ground below. But there was one fatal flaw, and through a tiny hole the invaders had poured in and commenced their work of undermining. Listening, the elder could hear the chisels of this terrible army of workmen, surely chipping away the wood of the floor. At one house I visited a wooden pile was shown me, nearly eaten through by these creatures. By mere accident the trouble was discovered, and the pile removed. The ordinary householder is not always competent to track the white ant. There may be nothing wrong to his vision, yet all the while the secret work of destruction may be proceeding apace. Hence experts make periodical visits to houses, and discover in time any mischief that may be brewing.

Brisbane is, to all intents and purposes, a smokeless city. The new factory chimneys, of course, contribute smoke to the fair atmosphere, but so far as the private houses are concerned, few wreaths of smoke ascend, for the reason that few fires are burned. In many houses there are no fireplaces at all, save in the kitchen, and there the gas-stove is generally in operation. This absence of smoke is a veritable pleasure. In this particular Brisbane resembles Florence. It is a suggestion also. Not every climate is so warm as this, but in colder climes, where artificial heating is

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necessary, the smoke nuisance might well be reduced by the use, as here, of gas and electricity.

Brisbane claims to be the most picturesque city in the Commonwealth, and with reason. Its natural situation is not so fine as that of Sydney. It has no harbour comparable with Sydney Harbour. But the city itself is more eastern, more tropical than the southern cities. Its death-rate is the lowest in all the Commonwealth, and that speaks volumes for the climate. The weather is nearly always bright. The winter is one prolonged delight. It equals Hastings, say, in May or June. The spoiled children of Southern Australia who find their winter "cold" come up north and spend the "chilly" months in sunny Queensland. The climate is much warmer than that of Victoria, and it is much more equable. In Brisbane they know nothing of those startling changes in temperature to which men are accustomed in Melbourne. A Brisbane man shudders when we tell him that in Melbourne the thermometer sometimes drops forty degrees in half an hour. But if Brisbane heat is greater than the heat in Victoria, it is tempered by a delicious breeze which springs up every morning with the utmost regularity about eleven o'clock.

Insect life, white ants excepted, is most fascinating in Brisbane. The moths and butterflies are gorgeous to the last degree. They flash in the sunlight, living rainbows, displaying the most ravishing colours. In these semi-tropical regions the colours of nature seem to reach absolute perfection. Sky, flowers, and

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insects all match. There is no blue so wonderful as that of these skies, and no colours more soft and subduing than those which overspread the heavens at the moment of sunset.

While here I have had the experience, twice repeated, of a tropical thunderstorm. Nothing can approach this in majesty and terrifying power, unless it be a storm in the Alps. There, the feature of the storm lies in the long-continued reverberations of the thunder crashing amongst the mountains. Here the thunderstorm is marked by a terrible display of lightning, and by the appalling colour of the sky. The storm gathers in an incredibly short period of time. After a day or two of abnormal heat, radiated from a pellucid atmosphere, the clouds suddenly appear. In an hour the heavens assume a slaty appearance, a ghastly colour that speaks of anguish and coming dissolution. Everything grows dark. It seems as if the hour of the traditional judgment had arrived. An ominous wind sweeps over the country, bending stately palms beneath its fury and threatening to uproot smaller trees. And then from afar comes the muffled roar of the storm. It is like the march of a hostile army. Great guns seem to boom, gatling and quick-firers rattle their shot across the plain. And then, for an hour or more, the heavens become alive with light. The lightning appears in a dozen places at once, stabbing, tearing, exploding. The thunder is awful. And then the rain descends, as no Englishman who knows but his own land has ever seen it fall. Not in drops, but in sheets, it pours

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down until every street becomes a river. It is useless to attempt to speak while the flood is upon us. It is the din of a battle at its height, for the roofs of the houses in Brisbane are made of corrugated iron, and the rain falling upon this resounding substance produces a terrifying effect. And amid the tempest, while human voices are hushed, there is one glad note heard. One creature is excited to delirious pleasure through the storm. Silent as the grave while the tempest gathers, this creature chants in triumph while the storm rages. It is the frog. No man knows the vocal capacities of the frog until he hears it croak in one vast chorus during a tropical storm.

CHAPTER IX

QUEENSLAND, THE RICH UNPEOPLED STATE

THE northern territory of Australia constitutes the "grand problem" of the Commonwealth. How vast a problem that is no man can realise until he in person visits the north. There, in very truth, is the colour line, drawn, not by the caprice of man, but by the hand of Nature. And the grand question to settle is, Can the white man live and toil in the north as he does in the south? One party says "No," the other party says "Yes." When the question is finally settled, then a great era of prosperity may commence. The natural wealth and resources of the north are almost incredible. Yet they are largely untapped, and the bottom reason for this is the nebulous state of the colour question. Once demonstrate that the white man can live in these tropical regions, and then will come a great immigration and an abounding prosperity. But while the doctrine of a "white Australia" is proclaimed coincidentally with the dogma that the white man cannot toil in the north, so long will the north remain a problem.

Queensland is at once the largest, the richest, and the most scantily populated of the States of the Australian Commonwealth. Its area is eight times that

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of Victoria. It possesses no fewer than 429,120,000 acres, of which only 650,472 acres are under cultivation. And in all that vast territory there are but 760,000 people. It is amazing, almost appalling. Little wonder that the Government of Queensland is laying itself out to attract to this rich country a population from beyond the seas; for the authorities have the wit to perceive that a land so fruitful and promising cannot, in the nature of the case, remain uninhabited for long. Neighbouring peoples with overflowing populations are not unmindful of the fact that almost at their door there lies a promised land crying out for men to enter and possess it. The danger involved in this fact is one that thousands of Australians do not wish to recognise.

The vast majority of people in the Old Land are utterly ignorant of Australia, and particularly of Queensland and the north. Let me try to make the situation clear.

First of all, Queensland has a climate. In the extreme north it is tropical, in the south it is semi-tropical. The Government claims that it is the healthiest climate in the world. I hold no brief for Queensland, and therefore I merely pass on the official statement. But there is no question about the beautiful climate. In the winter-time thousands of persons from the south, from Tasmania and New Zealand, take the trip to Cairns and the north—the land of eternal summer. “Winter” is practically unknown in Queensland. What a Queenslander calls

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“winter” a Londoner would call early summer. In this particular Queensland stands in direct contrast to Canada, that land which hitherto has monopolised the British emigrants. Ice and snow are unknown. The soil is ever fertile, the sky is ever blue. The man who has no house in which to live need shed no tears; he will probably find it quite as comfortable to live in the open air. “Sleeping out” is as common as sleeping in. Even in the south we practised that. In Melbourne we abandoned our bedroom for the balcony. In Queensland we should not have a bedroom at all. A superb climate, then, is the first great asset of this northern State.

When we descend from sky and air to the earth, the prodigious natural wealth of the land staggers one. It is hardly believable that one single State can yield what Queensland does. Take, for example, the matter of fruits. In the Government Bureau at Brisbane there are cases containing models of the fruits of Queensland. And the list comprises such luxuries as the pineapple, giant banana, custard apple, cocoa pods, grenadilla, mangoes, persimmons, tamarinds, pomeloes, paw-paw, giant plums, grapes, oranges, lemons, apples, pears, peaches, cherries, figs, apricots, nectarines, quinces, strawberries, passion fruit, rosellas, blackberries, Cape gooseberries, melons, loquats, and guavas. Was there ever such a list for one State? These tropical fruits are simply wonderful—wonderful for variety and for magnificence. Think of peaches measuring eleven inches in circumference! The great problem is to find a

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worthy market for these fruits. Many of them cannot now be transported to England on account of the distance. But when an adequate population brings the demanded railway and the mono-rail, fast steamers and the Trans-Siberian Railway between them, together with a fast service of steamers in the Panama Canal, diminishing the distance between Queensland and London, reducing the time of transit to seventeen or eighteen days, then the Queensland fruits, so strange to Englishmen, may be found at Covent Garden.

From fruits let us turn to crops. Wheat, maize, oats, barley, rye, and the usual cereals are, of course, easily grown. Two crops of maize each year are possible in parts of the country. Besides these, cotton, tobacco, coffee, rubber, sugar, rice, and arrow-root are easily grown. Think of the possibilities of commerce when crops such as these can be produced. When American cotton-planters make their "corner," and plunge Lancashire into distress, it might be worth the while of open-eyed spinners to turn their attention to a British colony where cotton can be easily cultivated. If persons at home only realised what Australia is capable of producing!

The minerals and gems of Queensland are remarkable. Practically all the minerals are found in this Northern State: gold, silver, copper, iron, coal, tin, lead, bismuth, graphite, etc.; while the gems include diamonds, sapphires, rubies, topaz, opals, emeralds, agates, cornelian, amethyst, and rock crystal. The

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total value of the output of gold from the mines of Queensland to the end of 1909 was over seventy million pounds sterling, while the total value of minerals, other than gold, was more than twenty-two million pounds sterling. There are about 250 varieties of minerals pertaining to the jewellers' and lapidaries' craft, and more than half of this number are found in Queensland. The great sapphire field of the State embraces an area of 400 square miles. One locality bears the suggestive name of "sapphire town." Yet, with all this profusion of gems, the sapphire and the opal cannot be obtained in Queensland more cheaply than in London or in Paris. A "ring," I suppose, keeps up the prices.

Industrially, this land is the working man's paradise. Farm labourers obtain from fifteen to twenty-four shillings a week, *plus* board and lodging. Ploughmen receive from fifteen to twenty-seven shillings a week, *plus* board and lodging. Ordinary labourers—lowest paid of all workers—six to seven shillings per day. Navvies, seven to twelve shillings per day. Carpenters, ten to fourteen shillings per day. Blacksmiths, ten to fifteen shillings per day. "Useful lads," from five to fifteen shillings per week, *plus* board and lodging. Domestic servants (girls and women), from eight shillings to a pound per week. Cooks (women), anything from one to two pounds per week. What will ploughmen and farm labourers in England think of this scale of payment? Agricultural labourers and domestic servants are in great demand. Compared with the industrial condi-

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tions in the Old Land and in Europe, Queensland offers a veritable paradise to the worker. The marvel is that more people from the Old Land do not come to Queensland, especially when it is remembered that approved emigrants can obtain a passage for £5. Fourteen thousand miles for £5—think of it! As I watched the procession of merry youths and maidens passing along Brisbane streets and heard from one or two of them the story of their coming out from slumdom in England, I could only wish that capable and willing people “at home” who find it difficult to live, and who know nothing of ample spaces and a sunny climate, might find their way to Queensland—that fair spot in God’s creation where poverty is unknown and where work ceases to be drudgery. But only the capable and willing should make the voyage. Queensland is no place for fools or idlers. What Queensland sorely needs is a population of able-bodied people—English people, who will bring with them the best traditions of the Old Land. Queensland alone can easily carry a population of fifty millions of people. At present she has only about one-hundredth part of that number. Young men and women of England, to whom life is a bitter struggle, why do you not think of Queensland? Men and women of sterling character coming out here would help to lay the foundations of a great and a glorious State. . . .

One day we had a delirious motor ride through the bush, our objective being a seaside resort thirty or forty miles distant. When we left the city it was

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farewell to men. Mile after mile we travelled without encountering a single human being, or passing a single habitation. It was one solemn, vast solitude. A road, well made, traversed the forest. Around us and ahead of us lay the "bush," an immense entanglement of "scrub," dominated by the everlasting gum-tree. Strange birds flew here and there. Their plumage was often gorgeous to the last degree. Strange and uncouth animals crawled across the road from bush to bush. Once we surprised an iguana, a terrible-looking creature of most mild habits. The iguana, appearing upon the scene for the first time, sends a chill to the heart of the spectator. This glorified lizard has the visage of a demon and the courage of a rabbit. It scuttled away before our approach. In the heart of the bush we came upon a tragedy that must often be enacted amongst the animal dwellers of the great solitude—a kangaroo, a mother, unable to resist the pangs and pains thrust upon her by her destiny, lay dead upon the roadside. And above, on a branch of the tree, stood a pair of laughing jackasses, guffawing their loudest, as if life knew no tragedy and no pain. Another time we encountered a large snake, which stupidly raised its head against the motor. Kangaroos, snakes, macaws, parrots, "jackers"—these and their kind are in possession of the forest. Here and there man has settled down and commenced to cultivate the land. At once the soil has responded. We passed great patches of bananas and acres of pineapples. The ground awaits only the stimulus of the spade and the

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living seed, and it responds immediately with a prodigal crop of fruit. Here is this fertile country, taken all in all richer than any other, calling out to man to come and endow himself with its treasures.

CHAPTER X

THE ROMANCE OF QUEENSLAND SUGAR

THE marvel of Queensland grows upon one the more the country is studied. I have spoken about its vast territory, its small population, and its almost infinite possibilities in many directions of development. There remains one thing further to note—viz., the possibilities of Queensland as a sugar-producing country. Already this mere handful of population has developed the sugar industry in a remarkable way. Last year, for example, there were nearly 131,000 acres of land under cultivation for sugar cane alone, and from this nearly 171,000 tons of sugar (not cane) were produced. The industry has already called into existence a monthly journal entirely devoted to sugar interests. Turning over its pages we see what strides have been made. Therein are named all kinds of machinery for dealing with the product, from the moment when the farmer drives his plough into the ground, until the moment when the cubes of white sugar issue from the final cylinder of the refinery. Machines are now made for crushing the cane at the rate of 830 tons per day.

It is not, however, to technical details of this kind that I invite attention, but rather to one or two

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matters in connection with the industry which will be interesting—i.e. the romance of growing and the romance of refining the sugar.

Queensland, of all the Australian States, is capable of producing the most sugar. The climate is tropical, the area is enormous. Hundreds of square miles of land are awaiting cultivation. The door for genuine workers is more widely open than ever before, *and open to the white man*. But let it be understood that the pure white man who enters this tropical territory will not long remain white. He may retain all the instincts belonging to the white races, but his skin will be tanned, darkened, and in course of time perhaps blackened, under the powerful rays of the Northern sun. The white man, however, is entreated to come. The policy of the Commonwealth, to preserve a "white Australia," whether mistaken or not, is the policy that is in force. Black labour in the sugar plantations is a thing of the past. The Kanakas, formerly imported from the South Sea Islands, have all been returned to their native homes. Not a coloured man is permitted to work in Queensland. The Government supports the white man in a practical manner by giving a bounty on all sugar produced by pure white labour. This bounty, since 1905, amounts to £3 per ton of sugar—i.e. the finished product. The grower is further supported by a protective duty of £6 per ton on all foreign-grown sugar. But what about the consumer—the poor consumer? Ah! there's the rub. Protection secures excellent results to certain people, but I have

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yet to learn that the consumer is "protected" by so much as a farthing. The truth is that protection is most partial in its working. The few benefit by it; the many suffer. The price of living is rapidly increasing in the Commonwealth despite "Protection." Australia pays an excessive price for sugar. Why? Because the consumer is not protected against the "ring," which can fix any price it chooses for the sale of a commodity, knowing full well that the protective tariff effectually kills all competition. This, however, is a digression. I was saying that the door is open in Queensland for the *white man*, who, as a worker, has an unparalleled opportunity of piling up a modest little fortune. And for this reason the day of the great plantation has passed, and the day of the small holding has arrived. Formerly the situation was—the large capitalist, the large plantation, a handful of white men and a colony of "niggers." That meant a colossal fortune for the few and practical slavery for the many. But to-day the Government has inaugurated a "Government Central Mill" system, and this has meant the rapid breaking up of large estates and the establishment of a number of small holdings. Nearly 6,000 persons are now engaged in growing sugar-cane, and a race of independent white planters has been settled on their own holdings. To quote the official notice, "There never was a time in the history of Queensland when any person desirous of becoming a sugar-cane farmer could find easier conditions or greater facilities for success. The Government, the large

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planter, and the big sugar mill owner are all ready to assist him to a start." A labourer—i.e. a cane cutter—can earn as much as 15s. a day, and if he be a thrifty man he can save sufficient in a few years to commence cane-growing on his own account. There is a great industry, then, awaiting development in Queensland, and the natural people to undertake it are our own kinsmen in the Old Land. It has been established that white men can work in the North. Not *all* white men, however. I think I know a type of Englishman who would die of exhaustion were he transported to the hot climate of Queensland. With the development of the industry would come the question of markets. If Australia grows as it should, a market would be found at home—a market at hand. But there would also be a surplus for exportation. At present export markets are found in New Zealand, the Cape, and Canada. The United Kingdom is entirely barred. Englishmen, now accustomed to cheap sugar, would never pay the price which Australians would be compelled to ask for it.

I had no idea how the sugar-cane grew until I saw it in Queensland. Nor, for that matter, did I know how pineapples grew. Like many others, I conceived the pineapple as growing upon trees. It was quite a shock to find it growing after the manner of cabbages. Who would ever dream that these tall, knotted bamboo sticks contained the sweet substance which, when ground down and refined, appeared as sugar? Men, lightly clad, enter the plantations armed with a kind of bowie-knife—their weapon for

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severing the thick, heavy stalks of sugar-cane. The canes, deftly cut, fall upon the ground, whence they are transported to specially built trucks, and thus conveyed to one of the central mills to be crushed into pulp and converted into raw sugar. From the mill the raw material is sent in bags to the refinery, from which it issues as an edible article. By the courtesy of the manager of the Brisbane Sugar Refinery Company, we were allowed to follow the entire process of preparing the sugar for the market. In a huge storeroom there were piled some thousands of sacks of raw sugar, recently arrived from the mill. These white sacks arose, tier upon tier, like huge cliffs. But before the material is handled by the workers it is analysed and tested by the chemist. In a well-furnished laboratory there reposed all manner of chemicals, and weights and measures, and test-tubes. All the raw material entering the refinery is carefully examined and classified. For there are no fewer than twenty different kinds of sugar which pass under the chemist's observation. Chemistry has revolutionised the sugar industry. Waste is reduced to the minimum. The loss in working amounts to only two per cent. What was formerly thrown away has now become an important article of commerce. By-products have been created. The unwritten motto in the laboratory is, "Gather up the fragments which remain, that nothing may be lost." It was the chemist himself—this magician who can work miracles—who was kind enough to explain the whole system of working to us. The sugar is first

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of all weighed, and, said the foreman, with a pardonable touch of pride, "*the mill accepts our weights.*" The community is too simple, too small, too dependent to have yet developed the fine art of robbery and lying. Weighed, it is then emptied down a grating, as if it were sand rather than sugar. By ever-ascending machinery the raw sugar is then carried up a flue to an overhead copper, into which it is poured. The sacks, instead of being shaken, are put through a machine which extracts from them the last farthing's-worth of sweetness. The pouring of the raw sugar into the coppers is attended by a fine dust-storm, the particles of dust being sugar. It is a world of sweetness into which we have entered; the very atmosphere is impregnated with sugar. The odour is that of Demerara, the perfume of the forbidden cupboard of our youthful days. And to the perfumed atmosphere is added the hum of whirling machinery. It is sugar set to music. From the copper the mass passes into a hopper, where it is mixed with syrup. Thence it is poured into centrifugal machines whose violent revolutions separate liquid from solid, and leave behind in the pans a purer grain. Partially refined, the changing mass is discharged by means of shoots into melting-vats below. Water is now added, and a strange liquor, anything but like sugar, is formed. The metamorphosis proceeds, mocking and bewildering as metamorphoses generally are. Half-drowned in liquor, the inebriated sugar is pumped up into adjusting pans, from which it goes on to the filters, where

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the separation of mechanical impurities from the sugar in solution takes place. At the very summit of the refinery the filters repose. These great vessels are filled with bone charcoal which has been subjected to the terrific temperature of 4,000 degrees Fahrenheit. Under this frightful heat all organic matter has been entirely destroyed. Through this mass of charcoal the liquid sugar passes—a depth of twenty feet—and when it emerges at the bottom the liquor is purified. But it is not yet sugar. The pure liquor which runs into the tanks consists of 60 per cent. sugar and 40 per cent. water. Now the task is to evaporate the water and leave behind the pure sugar. To accomplish this, the whole mixture is poured into a vacuum pan, in which the water is condensed. The evaporation over, a granular mass is left behind. This mass then falls into other tanks, where it is continually stirred by mechanical levers to prevent it becoming spoiled. Then, again, the centrifugal machine is requisitioned, and the sugar is finally dried. There remains but one stage more—the roasting—and then through an opening in the last cylinder the white sugar falls upon the board.

It is all so simple, yet so complicated. And it is immensely fascinating. The human hand does not touch the product from beginning to end of the refining process. Machinery—as nearly intelligent as machinery can ever be—accomplishes the whole. And then my comrade points a moral. He contrasts this scientific and humane work with those old clumsy and brutal methods which prevailed on plantations of

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other times. Then the laws of sanitation were unknown, or disregarded. Human feet did what steel does to-day. Dirty hands touched what even clean hands to-day never touch. And then there was the whip, the oath, the kick, and often the thin stream of red blood running down the face or the neck of the negro. The world has changed, thank God! Things are not wholly going to the devil. There is a history of ever-broadening humanity concealed in the story of the romance of sugar.

CHAPTER XI

THE AUSTRALIAN WINTER AND SPRING

THE seasons in Australia are, of course, the exact reverse of those in England. The longest day in England is the shortest day in Australia, and vice versa. June 21st is Australia's midwinter day; December 21st is midsummer day. The seasons are not so strongly divided from each other in Australia as in England.

In early September, when the days in the dear Old Country contract and the nights lengthen, spring bursts suddenly upon Victoria; the days are sensibly longer and the nights are shorter. "Burst" is the proper word to employ. No soft and sweet herald announces in advance the coming of spring. One day it is winter, the next day it is spring. It is an act of seeming magic. Without warning, the new life, which has lightly slumbered during the brief winter, awakens to new beauty. Here in my garden the tiger lily is in full flower, while narcissi, geraniums, wall-flowers, orchids, daffodils, and whole riot of fragrant flowers are as advanced as if we were already in the fullness of summer. My five fig-trees are in the high tide of pushing life; the vines are putting forth bud and leaf, peaches are in full blossom, and orchard

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and gardens are a panorama of loveliness. This is a new kind of spring to an Englishman; it takes one's breath away by its swiftness. After the slow approach of the English spring, this rapid appearance of new life appears to be a little unreal. For all that it is most acceptable. The Australians are glad to welcome it. They have had what they call a terrible winter. Apologetically, they remark that this has been the worst winter they have experienced for very many years. Dear spoiled children! They do not know what a bad winter means. One little frost we have had, with its legacy of thinnest ice, which the children treasured as if it had been a marvel unheard of before. During this "terrible winter" we have had fewer than a dozen fires in the drawing-room, and on ten days only has it been chilly enough to necessitate an overcoat. Every day have I sat at work in my study with the window wide open and never the suspicion of a fire in the grate. True, rain has fallen heavily, and on the heights far away from the city there has been a coating of snow. At Ballarat and other places, situated at an elevation of 1,500 to 2,000 feet above the sea, snow has fallen heavily, and the good old game of snowballing (so rare in Australia) has been indulged in. But that is an exception. The winter, from my point of view, has been marvellously mild. The heavy rains have been a godsend, and have insured a great harvest of wheat and fruit.

In the country around Melbourne, to a distance, say, of forty miles, spring has rendered the entire

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landscape indescribably beautiful. By the banks of the river the wattle is growing in all the glory of its yellow life. There is nothing in the Old Country exactly like the wattle. The blossom resembles mimosa glorified, but it grows on trees which resemble the laburnum tree. Its round, fluffy flower is a miracle of delicacy. The orchards offer a scene of beauty difficult to describe but impossible to forget. Imagine, if you can, what it must be like—a hill-side covered with over seven thousand apple trees in full blossom. This is the great country of apples. One grower, who indulges in the business as a pastime—his fortune being gained in other directions—sent home to England last year over two hundred and fifty thousand pounds' weight of apples. What a larder is that in the Old Country to fill! And apples are so plentiful that in Melbourne, in the season, they sell for half a crown per case of forty pounds.

One of the "show" places nearest to Melbourne is Healesville, situated in the heart of the hills, and in the early spring a place of beauty. It is a miniature Switzerland. Mount Juliet is capped with cloud, and an ordinary imagination suffices to pretend that beyond the mystery of the hidden summit there lie great ranges of snow-crowned peaks. On the other side of the valley the slopes of the mountains are covered with tall trees, which it is easy to pretend are pines.

In the centre of that vast solitude we stand listening to the rush of waters in the depths of the valley, and ever turning our eyes to the heights which

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allured and awed us. Beyond Healesville the "bush" commences, and into it we penetrate for several miles. The trees, for the most part, are evergreen, so that the coming of spring makes little difference to the general appearance of the scene. But in the undergrowth the charm of new life unfolds itself on every hand. Giant tree-ferns fling out new-green fronds at the top of their imposing pedestals, many of which are twenty feet high. The spectacle of immense ferns spread out after the fashion of an umbrella is quite unique. The giants of the bush—the great gum trees—are wonderfully impressive. Many of these eucalyptus trees are two hundred feet in height. In fact, Victoria boasts of possessing the largest trees in the world. Their height and girth are enormous.

Yet there is a tragedy of the bush! We drove through a charming valley in which the hand of death was manifest. Last summer these enormous trees and this dense bush were subjected to their baptism of fire. On a summer afternoon, when all Nature lay panting in the heat, suddenly a tongue of red flame shot up from the midst of the bush. It was the work of some careless smoker who had thrown down his lighted vesta into a heap of dry fern, or perhaps it was a spontaneous outbreak due to the terrible heat. But when that red signal was announced the doom of the forest was sealed. Useless for mortal man to attempt to fight a bush fire. There was nothing possible but to ascend an eminence and watch the frightful billows of fire pass over the forest until

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nothing remained to consume. The flames ran along the ground, greedily licking up every frond of fern, and bush of gum. The red tongues mounted the giant eucalyptus, consuming their slender branches and picking off their healing leaves. Masses of birds flew about in distress, as they beheld their home destroyed. The roads were lined with rabbits, foxes, and serpents, escaping from the fire. For days the furnace raged; and then came the end, when a perfumed smoke, thick as black night, hung over the country. This gradually became thinner, until finally its last blue wreaths passed away, and Nature set herself to the work of restoration. It is a terrible sight to behold these giant trees scarred and half calcined, fit only, it would seem, for the axe and the saw. Yet the work of recuperation is both rapid and astonishing. Spring has not disdained these wounded stalwarts. Green shoots have been flung out everywhere, and embrace, as with affection, the blackened and carbonised trunks whose doom was all but fixed. Nature, in this spring mood and beauty, is like some fair maiden who clasps with her soft arms the wrinkled neck of a father who has suffered grievous misfortune on her behalf. Only the great trees show traces of the last great fire. The undergrowth, reduced to ashes, has sprung up again as by enchantment. But it will take years for the giant trees to recover themselves. A bush fire inflicts an injury which is difficult to repair. Yet it brings with it an immense boon. Often it accomplishes in a week, in the way of clearing dense places, what the skill of

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man could hardly accomplish in years. And it has this further advantage: it makes the wattle grow. "After a fire comes the wattle." The hard seeds of the beautiful flowers are cracked by the heat, and their vital principle is thus liberated for the purpose of growth.

* * * * *

In the country the spring brings out the "pests"—the British importations which misguided enthusiasts introduced into the country—i.e. the sparrows, the rabbits, and the foxes. The countryside is alive with them, and they do immense damage. The birds menace the fruit trees, the rabbits the green stuff, and the foxes anything that comes in their way. The fox was introduced for purposes of sport. In turn *he* has turned sportsman, and holds in terror his master. The indictment against the fox in Australia is a heavy one. In the Old Country he is a slow breeder, and he is carefully guarded. Woe to the luckless farmer who shoots him. My lord the squire will pay, to a limited extent, the chicken bill rather than lose the fox. Here there is not a farmer or a squatter who would not account it a special providence to have the chance of shooting a fox. They give him no run. Nothing less than sudden death satisfies them. Throughout the whole year he fares well, but the spring-time is his great opportunity. He pounces upon the newly born lambs, and kills three or four of them for the pleasure of devouring the delicacy of their small tongues. Generally the remainder of

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the little creature is left untouched. Lamb's tongue is what the fox seeks. Here, as at home, he will kill or maim most of the occupants of the hen roosts. But, bolder than at home, he devours ducks, swans, turkeys, and, cruellest of all, the beautiful lyre bird. This fine creature, whose beauty demands that it should be preserved, is being slowly exterminated by the fox, the crafty thief that, with generations of murderous blood in its veins, has been let loose amongst a bird population unable to defend itself. On the side of the fox is hereditary experience; on the side of the birds hereditary helplessness and want of suspicion. The contest is not fair. The introducer of the fox into Australia is now regarded as a public nuisance and an enemy of the soil.

And so, murder and beauty flourish side by side in this new country in the spring-time. Here, as everywhere, it is a mystery of Nature, of which the full solution is not yet given.

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The spring entices all the world out of doors. "Houses," says the local sage, "are not in this country built for residence; they are merely a refuge when our true residence—the open air—is not available, owing to climatic derangement." Already people are dragging their beds on to their balconies, where they sleep. The open air becomes a hostel in which all the wise lodge.

The long beach, stretching for many miles between Melbourne and Black Rock, becomes, for the

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greater part of the spring and summer and autumn a huge encampment, where city workers, after the toil of the day, spend their leisure. Besides the beach there are the parks and public gardens, second to none in the world. Hundreds of people sleep out at nights on verandas, in gardens, and upon the seashore. The cool nights entice into the streets a multitude of people, who throng the highways until midnight. English is, of course, the language that is spoken, but the life that is lived is Continental. It is impossible for anyone to be dull here in this summer climate. The sunshine has entered into the people's blood and inoculated it with merriment. Men live in a garden of God, where every prospect pleases and only a few men are vile.

* * * * *

As the spring advances and the summer approaches Australians are on the move, bent on holiday making. It is here that the contrast between England and Australia is seen to the advantage of the latter. There are very, very few "workers" in Australia who are unable to afford a summer holiday.

Surely never was there a people so enamoured of holidays as the Australians. Upon the least excuse there is a public holiday. New Year's Day commences the recital. That is followed by "Foundation Day" on January 31st, St. David's Day in March, St. George's Day in April, Prince of Wales's birthday in June, Separation Day in July, Bank Holiday in August, Eight Hours' Day in September, Cup Day

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in November, and the King's birthday in the same month. It is a formidable list, extending over the various States. "The working man's paradise" they call Australia, and not without good reason. There is another side to this, upon which I have yet to dwell, but just now the sunny side is being emphasised.

From one point of view there is not the same variety of holiday resorts in Australia as in England. How easy it is to cross from England to France and Switzerland and Italy! And within twenty-four hours of smoky, foggy London to be at peace under the shadow of Mont Blanc or the Matterhorn. Or within sixty hours to enter the gateway of the mysterious East at Tunis or Algiers! There is nothing resembling that on the Australian side of the equator. The nearest great snow mountains lie in New Zealand, five days' steaming from Melbourne. But within easy distance there are innumerable beauty spots which appeal to every taste and every purse. The garden island of Tasmania is becoming every year a greater favourite for many Victorians. Embarking on the steamer late in the afternoon, the traveller finds himself at Launceston early the next morning, and at Hobart a day later. And in that island he finds a climate much more temperate than that of Victoria, and a life more English than Australian. The salamander may easily run up to Queensland, and within forty-eight hours of Melbourne find himself in the lower tropics, amid sugar plantations, pineapple fields and banana plots. The mountaineer may go to New

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South Wales to the Blue Mountains, or to his own Buffalo range. While the ordinary person may find what he will on seashore or in fern gully.

The great Port Phillip Bay is dotted with water-places, of which one of the prettiest and most restful is Sorrento. Italian in name, it is almost Italian in aspect. A tree which lines the beach resembles, at a short distance, the olive trees for which Italy is so famous, and the houses, often hidden in plantations, might well be taken for those Italian retreats which lie around the Italian Sorrento. Sorrento has the advantage of the bay and of the "back beach." The bay is quiet, retired, and excellent for family bathing. The "back beach"—i.e. the ocean proper—is rugged, wild, restless. It has a majesty all its own, and a danger to match its majesty. Its waters are treacherous. The under-currents are strong and easily suck in the most powerful swimmer. Worse than the currents are the sharks which abound in these waters. They have the playful habit of dismembering venturesome people. Yet, despite the danger, there are headstrong fools who swim out, exposing themselves to attack. Recently a youth emerged from the water minus a leg and two fingers; yet, incredible as it seems, on the very next day other youths swam out into the very same sea and at the very same place. Sometimes a shark is detained prisoner in some deep pool, and then his fate is sealed. No pity is shown him; he is immediately shot. It is a study in human nature to watch an old salt engaged in the task of settling accounts with a

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shark. The process of dispatch is often delayed, cruel revenge being taken upon the brute for the misdeeds of his clan.

For my own part, I give the casting vote in favour of the fern gullies rather than the sea. Can there be found anywhere fern *trees* superior to those which Victoria offers? Fern *trees*, observe. Giant ferns grow to an immense height, after the manner of a palm. Their fronds spread out at the top like a giant umbrella. These ferns are found in gullies or little forests, and the spectacle they present is strikingly beautiful. At Gembrook one enters a natural cathedral where the columns are stately trees, whose interlacing branches form at the top a perfect roof, and whose decorations are wonderful giant ferns, fuller of fronds than any I have ever yet beheld. In the depths of this hidden place there reigns a profound and almost painful silence, broken occasionally by the sighing of the wind in the tops of the trees or by the screaming of a pair of quarrelsome parrots. Here, within these walls of living green, Nature seems to have her inner shrine. Men speak in whispers to each other as they do in a cathedral. The awe of God possesses the spirit. In that awful silence the soul of man speaks with the soul of the world.

The railway line to Gembrook is a primitive construction, which well matches the world through which it passes. The line is of a narrow gauge, and it mounts ever higher until it reaches an altitude of many hundreds of feet above the level of the sea. Throughout its length it winds round and round,

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skirting modest precipices and passing through avenues of trees. The scenery is indescribably beautiful. At many points a vista opens up along which vast stretches of country appear, hemmed in upon the horizon by the gleaming waters of the ocean. Nothing that I have seen in Australia so much resembles a ride in Switzerland as this journey from Fern Tree Gully to Gembrook. At the summit, on a hot summer day, the air is keen and bracing, and in the hotel at midsummer we found a fire blazing. This ride, apart from the charm of the scenery, offers a study in colonisation. Part of the country is the "bush" proper, left in all its native wildness. Everywhere we found marks of the visit of that dreaded enemy, fire. Huge gum trees, calcined and dreadful looking, stood out against the blue sky. Fierce flames had ravaged the district, sparing nothing. Elsewhere we found the work of clearing going on. Wooden chalets rose in the centre of the bush, and around these men had commenced to group small fields already yielding produce. Little by little the bush is disappearing under the hands of small farmers. At one place we found a miracle in the way of productiveness. Eighteen years ago a farmer purchased some hundreds of acres of bush. It was one mass of "scrub," as desolate a place as one would find anywhere. To-day it is the first "nursery" in Victoria. Upon its cleared ground thousands of fruit trees grow, and these are sent all over the States. The soil is wonderfully rich. As we wound round about the estate in the train, and observed these hundreds

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of acres in cultivation, and reflected that all this work had been accomplished within twenty years, the whole scene resolved itself into a mirror of this great country. From scrub to fertility—it is the history of Australia. And the best is yet to come, when an enlightened forward policy will encourage immigration, and so arrange affairs that the vast spaces of the biggest country in the world shall be filled with a happy working population.

CHAPTER XII

BUSH HOLIDAYS

THE ideal holiday in Australia is a holiday in the "bush." There are two Australias—one of the cities and towns; another of the country and the bush. The "country" is the cultivated portion of the land, reclaimed from desolation. In whichever direction the traveller passes, he soon encounters the "country," and begins to understand something of the enormous wealth of the soil.

Great farms come into view, covered with a multitude of sheep and oxen and horses. The soil in the north-east of Victoria is one of the richest on this great continent. In many places all that is needed is to fling the seed upon the soil, and harrow it in lightly, with the certainty of a speedy and rich crop. Land that was bought but a few years ago for £4 an acre now sells for anything from £50 to £150 an acre. And therein, perhaps, lies one of the great problems of this country. It is the land problem. These immense spaces are not divided amongst a multitude of small holders. They are the property of a comparatively few men. A huge blunder was made when the country was in the infancy of its development. Young Australia should

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have profited by the example of the Old Country, and never have allowed a land proprietorship like that which is the handicap of the Motherland. The Governments are already perceiving their error, and land is being repurchased for the State. They understand that no country can prosper as it should while the land is at the disposal of a few men who can command their own price, dictate their own terms, and gamble in a commodity which cannot be increased in bulk. Now, happily, in Victoria the large territories are being split up, and townships are consequently springing up, consisting of men who woo the land to fruitfulness. Towards Warrnambogl the remnants of the clearing of the bush are in evidence, thousands of gaunt trees, without leaf or bark, white as phantom trees, stand in great spaces waiting to be cut down. At their base runs the plough and the seed-planter. One day the clearance will be completed, and this whole country, brought under complete cultivation, will be among the most fertile in the world.

* * * * *

One of the fairest holiday spots in Victoria is Lorne, where bush, gully, and sea meet.

Primitive, retired, quiet, fifteen miles from a railway station, reached by a difficult road which passes through the bush, Lorne is the last word of holiday solitude combined with happy companionships. No policeman is there; none is ever required; the doors and windows of hotels and pensions are left open all night; there are no marauders to fear. The wide

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balconies surrounding the pensions are transformed into bedrooms at night, and men and women sleep out, while the sea quietly croons to them throughout the period of darkness. And every wind brings the scent of the eucalyptus to the sleeper. Lorne is a delightful place—a combination of Devonshire and Switzerland; that is, of course, on the small scale. The hills rise from the water's edge very much as Clovelly rises from the sea. The illusion that we are in Devonshire is aided by the presence upon the table at every meal of clotted cream—a dish beloved of Australians. The numerous hills surrounding Lorne, with their zigzag paths and waterfalls and gullies, are reminiscent of Switzerland, and here again the illusion is aided by the style of the boarding-houses. For everything save the balconies recalls the Swiss pension among the mountains. The fever of the city and the town has never descended upon this retreat. There is no fear of man lying upon bird or beast. The kangaroo and the wallaby do not move when the visitor appears upon the scene. Even the snake leisurely crawls away at the approach of the walker. As for the birds, they are a delight to behold. Little creatures clad in the most gorgeous plumage gather round our feet and pick up the crumbs we drop for them. They have not the slightest fear of us. It is likely they have never heard the detonation of a gun nor the bark of a pistol. Larrikins are barred—by distance—from coming to Lorne; hence the birds have never been chased by rude ruffians. St. Francis, if he came to Lorne, might

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easily imagine that he had lighted upon some of his old brothers and sisters who had not forgotten him. Besides these birds of beautiful plumage we have our perennial friend the jackass, banished by rude noise from the city, here entering into happy relations with us. Parties of laughing jackasses perch on trees at our very door and make the house ring with their infectious laughter. Life *al fresco* for us as well as for them; it is a magnificent change from the roar and nerve rack of the city.

Whoever comes to Lorne must walk. There is only one carriage excursion. All other promenades are made on foot. The choice lies between the sea, the mountain, and the gully. Few folk can resist the sport of cray fishing amongst the rocks upon the shore. Once commenced, it becomes a veritable fascination. They have a simple method of snaring the fish. Two bamboo canes—to the end of one a decayed fish is lashed; to the end of the other a loop of wire is attached—and that is all. But it is not quite so easy as it looks. The art consists in lowering the bait into the rock pool, where a crayfish may possibly hide. If the fish is there, he smells the bait, and in a moment crawls out to seize it. Then the second cane is lowered, and the loop passed under and around the creature's tail. Tickled by the wire, the fish curls his tail. That action seals his doom. The wire loop is immediately tightened, and the astonished crayfish, instead of regaling himself upon the bait, is hauled up to the shore. It requires more than a little cleverness of manipulation to ensnare

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the fish. There is no difficulty in enticing it from its rocky fortress to attack the bait; the trouble is to encircle the body with the loop.

The great excursions, however, are to the mountain and the gully. Parties leave in the early morning, provided with luncheon and the indispensable "billy" for tea. In every direction waterfalls and fern gullies are found.

Excursions to these gullies rank among the most pleasant experiences of a holiday. After a tramp of an hour or two through the "scrub," a halt is made for luncheon, and then the "billy" is boiled. The "billy" is an Australian boiling-pot in which delicious tea is made. A suitable spot is selected, stones are gathered upon which the pot is placed, and then the "scrub" is searched for pieces of wood and dried fern. The pot is surrounded with these and the fire is kindled. A muslin bag filled with tea is immersed in the boiling water, where it remains for a few moments. Then it is withdrawn and the tea is ready. I confess to having had a great prejudice against "billy" tea at first. It seemed to me to be only another form of the stewing-pot in the North of England, and to be a deliberate invitation to dyspepsia. And now I have quite a liking for it. Any who wish may try the experiment for themselves. The one thing to avoid is keeping the muslin bag in the pot for too long a time.

The "bush" is being slowly conquered. Town and city folk hardly know that it exists, so rapidly have the plough and the "forest devil" cleared the ground in

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the great centres. But in many parts it still offers great obstacles to pioneers. Where roads are not yet made, and river beds not yet formed or deepened, life is by no means easy. At a pension like ours in Lorne, where people from all over the State assemble, some weird and curious stories are told by visitors of the adventures which have befallen them. One of the most interesting was related by a clergyman who has served in various parts of the State. A few months ago he received a request asking him to marry a young couple in the bush. The day was fixed, and he was preparing to ride over to perform the ceremony, when suddenly a monsoonal storm burst upon the landscape, and in a few hours the creek had become a river. There was no means of telegraphic communication between the parson and the bridegroom, but simultaneously each went out to meet the other, directed by their sense of the fitness of things. They met at the stream, but lo! the bride was missing; the swollen river had cut her off. The ready bridegroom, however, was not easily daunted, and he had no intention of postponing the wedding. While the clergyman waited at the river bank the bridegroom rode off for his bride. The happy pair arrived in due time, and both of them waded through the river and presented themselves to be married. Dripping with water they were made man and wife, and then, re-entering the stream, they crossed it, took to their horses, and rode off to commence their new career. There have been many romantic marriages in the world, but none surely more romantic than this.

CHAPTER XIII

SOME BUSH YARNS

IN this our lazy midsummer holiday in February, our resting-place is on the margin of the "bush." As befits the occasion and the place, we have laid in a stock of bush stories, and in particular we are yielding ourselves to the enchantment of "We of the Never Never"—that frankly true and weird story of life in the Northern Territory, where a man's nearest neighbour is sixty or ninety miles away. And then, just as we finish the "Never Never" stories, there comes into our holiday life a dear old soul who knows all about the "Never Never" country, who has traversed its wilds and felt the strange pull of its life. She becomes, happily for our party, reminiscent, and night after night we listen to the recital of her adventures. Bordering upon seventy, her mind retains the clearness almost of youth, and the simple life in the open has left her face bronzed yet scarcely wrinkled, while her hair is as brown as a woman's in her thirties. It is difficult to realise that this quiet old lady, well educated and mentally alert to all that is going on in the Commonwealth to-day, commenced her career as a bush traveller, and has wandered over thousands of miles of uninhabited country.

Some Bush Yarns

The spirit of adventure is in her blood. Her grandfather came out in the vessel *Duff* in 1796 as a missionary to the islands that lie to the north of Queensland. Then there were real cannibals abroad, and a white person was in peculiar peril. After a brave attempt to evangelise these cannibals, the missionary found it necessary to remove to Sydney, where he became evangelist and missionary to the scattered people in the country round about. He had "assigned" to him one of the convicts from Botany Bay, but this precious scoundrel, learning that a little money was hidden in the house, conspired with another convict and made a murderous attack upon his master. The "wee little wife"—she was quite *petite*—rushed forward to assist her husband, and received upon her arm a blow from a knife which laid bare the flesh to the bone. Both husband and wife being left for dead, the robbers decamped, taking with them all the money in the house. When the little woman recovered, she seized her infant child and ran with him through the bush to Sydney, seven miles distant, to seek aid. And that little fellow, who narrowly escaped assassination, became the father of our delightful companion of the "Never Never" adventures.

The grandfather and grandmother in the region around Sydney were involved in many strange experiences in the early days of the nineteenth century. Railways and roads, in the modern sense of the word, were then unknown. Bush tracks were the only roads available for travellers. Lawlessness was common

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enough, and very difficult to suppress. England at that time was sending her convicts to Botany Bay, as later to Van Diemen's Land. Some of the convicts were villains of the deepest dye; others were victims of iniquitous laws, and were transported for the most trifling offences. Again and again the convicts broke loose, and took to bushranging. They raided cattle reaches, and drove off hundreds of beasts over the border. They "held up" travellers in the approved Dick Turpin or Claude Duval style. Life was held very cheaply then.

Persons who lived in the bush were always nervous when they had to go into Sydney to pay money into the bank, or to withdraw it. One day a "neighbour" of the missionary grandfather, learning that the latter was driving into Sydney, begged him to bank a sum of five hundred pounds for him. The commission was too dangerous, and it was declined. But the wee little wife, with woman's wit, hit upon a scheme for conveying the money safely, and she accepted the commission. The buggy in which they drove was high, and she, little woman, was very short, hence it was necessary for her to have a footstool. Within the covering of this footstool she sewed the bank-notes, and the journey commenced. Within an hour of the time of starting they were "held up" by masked bushrangers, who in the most polite manner requested husband and wife to dismount while the buggy was thoroughly searched. The little lady was assisted to the ground, and her footstool handed to her. Upon this she sat, watch-

Some Bush Yarns

ing the robbers examine the buggy. When they were satisfied they politely assisted her to the carriage, together with the innocent stool, and then profusely apologised for the inconvenience that had been caused. The story of the little lady's wit is treasured in the family, and is quoted against cynics who allege that missionaries and their wives are deficient in the quality of sharpness.

Brought up in an atmosphere of adventure, it is not surprising that the son of the old pioneer became in turn a traveller. When he married, the "Never Never" country called to him, and in a few years he started off, with his little family, upon a journey of two thousand miles. Our versatile old friend who tells us the story was at that time a girl of seven, and although sixty years have passed away since the memorable adventure, the details of the scenes are still fresh in her memory. First there was a kind of gipsy caravan in which the family lived and slept when the weather was unpropitious, and in which the stores were kept. Then came servants and cattle and horses, the latter for use on the new homestead to which they were bound in the great West, four months' march distant. The roads were rough and perilous. There was always the danger of the bush-ranger. And, most serious of all, it was necessary never to lose sight of water. There was no cross-country route available for the travellers; they were compelled to come down from the north as far as Melbourne, and then turn again north-west towards their destination. Melbourne was at that time a mere

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collection of huts. Where flourishing suburbs now stand there was the dense bush. In Melbourne itself a creek ran, and the gutters of the streets were deep streamlets in which one might easily be drowned. The whole region was wild and unsubdued. In the heart of the country through which they passed the natives roamed at will, conquered though uncivilised.

Sometimes they encountered hostile tribes arrayed in their warpaint, and in search of an enemy to kill. For one of their superstitions was that the death of any young tribesman must be surely due to the evil influence of another tribe, and when such a death occurred the warriors would go forth to kill some black or other—it did not matter who he was—so that equilibrium might be restored. Once our travellers encountered a band of warriors in search of a black to kill, and they had evidently determined to dispatch the native belonging to the caravan. For three days the poor fellow lay hidden in the van, fearing to show himself, and for three days the warriors waited for their prey. At last the discharge of a gun, with a fall of birds, convinced them that it would be imprudent to remain longer in the neighbourhood of this new “debbel debbel” which could evidently kill birds and might kill them. The journey was continued amid profound stillness, which was broken only by the screaming of parrots and the laughter of the jackass. On one of its stretches the travellers were three weeks without encountering a solitary human being, and then they lighted upon a shepherd, whom they were ready to embrace.

Some Bush Yarns

Every week the horses were allowed two rest-days. Saturday was the recognised washing-day. Although the travellers were "going bush," the cleanly habits of civilisation were strictly observed, even to the ironing of clothes. And the little girl of seven with astonishment watched her mother convert the tail-end of the caravan into an ironing-board. Sunday was observed in a Christian manner. There was always a service, the father reading the Anglican prayers and lessons to his family and attendants.

And then one day, after four months of continuous travelling, the new homestead came into view. The woman's heart sank within her as she beheld the new "home" to which they had come. It was little more than a barn, with great gaps between the boards. And the very first thing she beheld upon entering the bedroom was a tiger snake gliding into a hole. Did ever woman have such a welcome to a new home? But it was the "Never Never" country, and homesteads there boast no luxuries. But lo! when a few months had passed a true home was formed; a man's labour and a woman's deft fingers had combined to make a cosy dwelling, in which our little girl of seven grew up to womanhood.

The bush is not everywhere so rough as this. Times have changed and civilisation has altered the aspect of things. Our dear old grandmother companion of the "Never Never" has a son in North Queensland who lives in comparative luxury. His house is three hundred and fifty miles from the nearest railway station, yet he has electric light

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throughout the house, and boiling water laid on to bath and sinks. That, however, is because Nature has been kind to him. Seven years ago, when he went to his farm, he bored for water, and lo! an artesian well shot up a column of water to a height of 250 feet above the ground, and the water was boiling. And for seven years that flow has continued without diminution. It has already formed a huge lake more than a mile in width. The bush has a strange fascination for anyone who has once fallen under its spell. It has happened more than once that a kindly disposed Englishman has taken compassion upon a native baby and had it brought up in English fashion, clothed and educated as an English lad. And one thing has always happened when the lad reaches the age of eighteen or nineteen. He hears the call of the bush, and one day he is missing. Nature asserts herself as stronger than civilisation, and the lad is off to his true habitat.

Even with Englishmen and Australians the spell, once cast, remains. Our "Never Never" friend has another son who "went bush" for ten years, and then, weary of it as he thought, he came to Melbourne and entered a house of business. In less than a year he was back in the bush, unable to resist its call. For five years they have heard no word of him. But he is there somewhere in the North on a station, and one day he will write or suddenly reappear. The bush plays sorry tricks with men.

Slowly the "scrub" is being cleared. Great forest fires consume the wood and undergrowth of

Some Bush Yarns

hundreds of square miles of land, thus making it easier for men to exact from the soil the toll to which they are entitled. The day must come when there will be no "bush." When Australia has its transcontinental railways, from Melbourne to Fremantle and on to Port Darwin, and when an adequate population arrives, then the bush will be replaced by cities and farms and gardens. For there can be no doubt that Australia is a garden of Eden, and that its chief need is men to till the soil and to replenish the earth. And when there is true unity in Australia, and a common-sense, God-fearing and united Central Government, the real move forward will have begun.

CHAPTER XIV

A HONEYMOON IN THE BUSH

IT is to one of the most highly esteemed citizens of Melbourne that I owe the following thrilling narrative. He is a gentleman whose personal service, influence, and money have for many years been freely used for philanthropic, evangelistic, and general Church work. He is one of my own personal friends. It is necessary to say this at the outset as a guarantee of the truthfulness of the story which I am about to relate. Otherwise the reader might be excused for believing that a parson, hitherto without stain upon his character for veracity, had suddenly turned romancer, or that his former shrewdness had deserted him, leaving him the victim of a picturesque storyteller.

I have heard this particular story at least half a dozen times. It has always held me fascinated, and stirred in me what is left of the old Spanish blood—that thirst of adventure which belongs to men of the Peninsula.

The hero is now past 70. He will not be here during many more years to tell by word of mouth to a new generation the astonishing tale of the great adventure forty-three years ago. It is somewhat un-

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fortunate that the date of the occurrence was the first of April, but there is nothing of the *poisson d'Avril* in the narrative.

Figure to yourself, then, a tall, well-built Englishman, thirty years of age, out in Australia for the second time—recently married and out upon a honeymoon which combined the romance of love with the quest for a home in the Queensland bush. The young husband and wife had with them for companion the brother of the bridegroom, and they were journeying north to take possession of a sheep station in North Queensland. From Melbourne to Rockhampton they travelled by steamer. There civilisation ended. The distance between Rockhampton and Oakey Creek—their destination—was 170 miles. The roads were simply bush tracks; the rivers were unbridged. The unsubdued country provided excellent cover for the lawless bushrangers, who spared neither life nor property.

Three horses were purchased, two of which were harnessed to an American express wagon. The third horse was saddled for riding. It was a modest caravan that left Rockhampton, comprising tent, baggage, food, gun, axe, and sundries. The young bride, already tasting the joys and romance of wedded love, set out for a new romance, which, had she been able to forecast it, would never have been adventured. The rainy season was drawing to a close; the weather was dry and the roads good. There was no appearance of floods. In the tropics the atmospheric changes are often startling. It was not long before a deluge

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of rain descended, rendering locomotion exceedingly difficult on account of the softening black soil. The first great creek, generally easy to cross, presented a difficult problem on account of the steep and slippery wet banks, up which the team could scarcely climb. When the plateau was gained, the travellers determined to unyoke for the night. The married pair slept as best they could in the wagon, while the odd person, clad in a blanket, reposed under the wagon.

The next day a fourth horse was secured, in order that the wagon might be moved, the task being impossible for three horses on account of the heavy roads. Still the rain descended, causing rivers and creeks to rise in flood. The river at Yaamba, twenty-five miles from Rockhampton, was only just passable. The wagon had to be unloaded, and the impedimenta all packed on the backs of the horses. After several days' marching at a distressingly slow rate, the travellers reached the Mackenzie River, which was in full flood. Oakey Creek, the future home of the newly married couple, lay only forty miles away. But between them and safety lay the formidable water, and, what was worse, possible starvation, for all the rations were exhausted, and the obtaining of further supplies seemed out of the question. They were in the heart of a country practically uninhabited. The cattle stations sometimes lay at a distance of forty miles from each other. The trio passed just one family of kind-hearted Scotch folk, who could not, however, replenish the exhausted

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larder, since they were cut off from their own supplies by the dangerous floods. The only thing to be done was to attempt to cross the river in the native manner. This consisted in stripping large sheets of bark from the gum trees, fastening them at the ends, and making them watertight with stiff clay. A rude canoe was thus formed. The canoes were made, but the horses refused to swim across the seething waters; so the canoes were abandoned. It was then decided to leave the horses, wagon, and baggage on the bank of the river while the three travellers crossed to the other side in a frail canoe. The brothers went first to test the strength of this primitive boat. The bridegroom then returned for his bride. And now came a misfortune. In crossing the river the second time the single improvised paddle was jerked from the hand of the rower by a snag. In a moment the little barque, with its two occupants, was at the mercy of the swirling waters. Round and round they whirled in the centre of the stream, driven and drawn by the force of the current. The brother on the opposite bank was helpless. For the length of a mile the canoe was dragged by the stream, until at last it dashed against a tree and began to sink.

Foreseeing the catastrophe, the bridegroom had flung off all his clothes except a Crimean shirt, and at the moment of the impact, when the canoe commenced to sink, he seized the rein of a bridle and flung it over the projecting bough of a tree which itself was swaying in the current. This refuge being insecure, and another tree being descried a few yards

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away, the bridegroom seized in his teeth the neckerchief of his bride, and, entering the water, swam with her to the tree. In turn this tree was found to be insecure, and the pair, repeating the experiment, swam to yet another tree. It was then six o'clock at night, and darkness was rapidly coming on. On a lower bough the wife, and on a higher bough the husband, spent that interminable night. There they clung, the husband clad only in one garment, the wife with clothes wet to her skin, and both suffering from hunger. It says much for British pluck that they spent the night in singing all the hymns and songs they could remember in order to keep awake. To make matters worse, two or three heavy thunderstorms burst over them during the night. The tropical lightning played around them, and the drenching rain poured over their exposed bodies. Their pluck never failed them. The bridegroom declares to this day that they seemed immune from all fear. *He* cannot give a reason for it—probably a psychologist could.

When dawn came—and never dawn came so slowly—the pair consulted as to the next step to be taken. They elected to be strapped together, and either to drift down stream together to a place of safety, or else to perish together. The final struggle was before them, and, for life or death, they would take it together. So into the water they passed, and, lo! the water being warmer than the night air, a new sense of vigour came to them. Several times the bride went under the water, but at length they

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reached the bank. They landed in an unknown country. Around them was a dense scrub, into which they plunged in the hope of finding a track leading to some cattle station. The sun was obscured, and they had no means of taking their bearings, so they were compelled to return to the river, along the course of which they walked. Hour after hour they trudged through the dense growth, until at last they struck a bush track. Then it was that the strength of the bride gave way, for a time at least. Picture to yourself this pair: the man clad only in a Crimean shirt, bespattered with mud; the woman hatless, nearly bootless, the leather having been worked up into a pulp, and she also covered with mud and wet through. The wife was too exhausted to proceed, so the husband went forward alone to explore. Following the cattle track, he arrived in course of time at a mob of working bullocks, and soon afterwards came to their owners. These rough bush workers provided the one a pair of moleskin trousers, another a sou'wester, and a third a pair of boots, which, however, could not be worn, so swollen and cut were the man's feet. Provisions even here were at a discount, being reduced to one pancake on account of the flood; but, with true bush generosity, this last article of food was handed over to the starving man. Three men went in quest of the wife. When they reached the spot where the husband had left her, she was not to be found. She had fallen asleep, and, suddenly awaking in a delirium, had wandered into the bush to

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hide from black stumps which her excited fancy had mistaken for natives. The bushmen promptly conducted the pair to their encampment, where a bed was made for them out of long grass. For nine days they were compelled to wait while the river subsided. During this time they lived chiefly on stewed parrots and maize.

After the subsidence of the swollen river, the first thing was to search for the brother, who had completely dropped out of view. He was found a few miles away. The rest of the story need not be told. Suffice it to say that at length their bush station was reached and their home established.

Months afterwards, when the river was at its lowest, the husband and wife visited the scene of their peril, and found the tree upon which they had spent that eventful night. They took a plank from the tree, and of it made a casket, upon which a silver plate was affixed containing the story of the great adventure.

* * * * *

That was forty-three years ago. The bride "passed over" a few years ago; the aged bridegroom still survives to tell his grandchildren the story of that wonderful night. Since that day the railway has come, and the whole country has been opened up. The modern settler has an easy time of it compared with the settler of those days. There are certain parts of the country where life is still hard, and where it might be nearly as difficult to cross a

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river as it was for that pair nearly half a century ago. Episodes of this order, however, are becoming more and more rare, and the day is rapidly approaching when Australia will be as easy to traverse as is America, which in parts was once as wild as the bush under the Southern Cross. When the age of ease and luxury arrives, the children of that time should be told how difficult was the task of the pioneers, and how great the dangers to which they were exposed.

CHAPTER XV

THE HIGHWAYMEN OF THE BUSH

A COUNTRY spacious and sparsely inhabited. A land where men found gold or reared cattle. A remote part of the world into which Dame Fashion dare not penetrate. And, above all, a domain dominated by the terrible bushranger. Such was my earliest conception of Australia. Such is the conception of it which still obtains in the minds of thousands of British people. And how different is the reality! The country certainly is spacious and sparsely inhabited. Men also get gold and rear cattle, but not as once they did. The days of finding are over. And as for Dame Fashion, she is very much in evidence. She is more audacious here than anywhere else, except it be Paris.

But it is of the bushranger that I propose to write; the bushranger who *was*, even as late as thirty years ago, but who now no longer exists. The swaggering villain of the time-honoured novel who entered an Australian bar and "held up" proprietor and patrons, and having robbed them took to the road again, he has ceased to be. The last stand made by bushrangers was at Beechworth, amongst the hills. It is an enchanting country, full of natural

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wealth and beauty : a place hidden from the eyes of the crowd, but sought by tired town-dwellers, who, weary of dust and noise, aspire after a period of repose in a spot where the air is a veritable elixir of life, and where the earth laughs with flowers and fruits. High as is Beechworth, oranges and lemons grow there. But, despite its attractions, the town is beginning to die. This is the tragedy of Australia—that small towns which were called into existence through the finding of gold begin to perish as soon as the gold is exhausted. The mines are closed down; the miners depart; shopkeepers lose their patrons, and they, too, are compelled to put up the shutters. The city grows, the small country mining towns diminish, and all because the mining towns had only mining upon which to depend. Beechworth sprang into existence in a day as the result of the discovery of gold in the locality. Thousands of men smitten with the gold fever poured into the township and searched for the precious metal. Men became rich in a few weeks. The few who went to church thought nothing of placing upon the collection-plate a nugget of gold when a special appeal for help was made. The rest lavished their money upon all kinds of objects. Bars, it goes without saying, flourished. The saloon-keepers asked what price they liked for liquor, and they always obtained it without demur. A “treat round” has more than once cost £40, which was cheerfully paid. In ten years’ time a saloon-keeper could retire on a handsome competence. Gold was accounted nothing of—it was so plentiful. The

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first member of Parliament for Beechworth signalled the occasion of his election by riding through the streets of the town upon a horse whose four shoes were made of solid gold. Then came the reaction. The claims were worked out, the miners departed, and Beechworth is suffering. Yet commissioners say that there is more gold left in Beechworth than ever was taken from it, but it is to be obtained at greater cost of money and trouble than formerly. No longer can men dig up the quartz from a foot or two below the surface of the ground. Shafts must now be sunk. But the gold is there for the enterprising.

Gold and bushrangers! There is an affinity between the two. But for the presence of the one, the others would not have come into existence. Beechworth, fair in situation and rich in minerals, was once the centre of the operations of the most desperate gang of bushrangers Australia has ever known. I heard the story from the lips of the "oldest inhabitant," a vigorous old Scotsman who has passed his eighty-fourth year, and who retains a clear memory and a youthful spirit. He was one of the magistrates who tried the members of the terrible "Kelly gang." He pointed out the place where stood the prison in which the precious scoundrels were incarcerated. With pride he conducted us to a rock which is named after him—Ingram's Rock—from which we obtained a marvellous panorama of a hilly country extending many miles in every direction. And there, deep down in the dell, lay caves and other

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hiding-places in which the thieves found shelter from the harassing police and soldiery. We stood in the heart of the bushrangers' country.

The story of that time, when told to-day, makes the flesh shiver. As we surveyed the beautiful landscape, and shared the deep tranquillity of hill and dale, we found it difficult to believe that only thirty years ago this country-side was at the mercy of three or four desperadoes, who kept the inhabitants in a state of continual terror. Three or four men—Irishmen—armed with guns and revolvers, raided where they pleased, killed whom they pleased, and lived as they pleased. Soldiers and police alike were foiled by them, and when they were at last taken it was more by accident than design. Dick Turpin, so far as England is concerned, belongs to a past age. "Dom Q" may be still wandering in some guise or other amongst the Spanish mountains. But that a small band of Irishmen should, at the end of the nineteenth century, and upon British territory, continue the exploits of the old-world robbers is almost incredible.

The father of the Kellys—for such was the name of the gang—was an Irishman and a Roman Catholic who came over from the Emerald Isle with the reputation of being an "informer." His son Ned—the "terror" of the gang—was a handsome young fellow, who, with his brothers, found it much easier to live upon the produce of other people than to work honestly for his own living. He became a professional cattle-stealer, was caught and imprisoned.

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Released from jail, he threw off all restraint and took to the bush as a robber. Bushrangers had been common for many years, but at last the race was beginning to thin out. The Kellys determined to revive the gory glory of the ancient times. The country around Beechworth afforded them excellent cover, while the towns and scattered houses and "stations" offered them as much plunder as they desired. A murder was the signal for departing from civilisation and taking to the adventures of the bush. Despite the fact that the country-side was alarmed, and that the police were scouring the country in search of the outlaws, these last continued their robbing profession with almost unbelievable coolness. One day they entered the National Bank at Euroa at a time when many of the inhabitants of the town were at a funeral. They were well dressed, with no suggestion of the outlaw about them. Covering the clerks with their revolvers, they demanded all the cash the bank contained, the sum amounting to nearly £2,000. Then, gathering the entire staff of the bank together, they bade the manager harness a horse and prepare a carriage. And there issued from the bank premises a buggy containing the manager, with his wife and children, together with a cart containing the robbers and the plunder. All were driven to Faithfull's Creek, where the prisoners were entertained by the thieves until such time as the latter thought fit to leave them, which they did at nightfall. The manager of the bank and his family found their way back to the town as best they could. Meanwhile,

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the Kellys were safely hidden in one of their favourite places of concealment. For cool daring this exploit has not often been surpassed.

They stopped at nothing. When, after another murder, the police started in a special train to a place where the Kellys were known to be, the robbers raced across the country to a spot where the train had to pass. They commandeered the stationmaster, and afterwards some platelayers to destroy the railway, and so to wreck the coming train. Luckily, however, the disaster was averted. One of the outlaws' prisoners managed to escape and possess himself of a candle, a red scarf, and matches. With these for danger signals, he reached the railway as the train was approaching, and, lighting the candle, held the red scarf in front of it. The device was successful. The strange red light was seen, and the train drew up a few yards away from the place of danger. Meanwhile, the robbers had achieved the daring business of imprisoning in a large hotel a number of citizens who might have made trouble had they been at liberty. Driven in to the number of sixty-two, they were held at bay by four outlaws, who, by force of arms and reputation, were masters of the situation. The robbers were by this time clad in armour made from stolen ploughshares by a local blacksmith. Head, chest, back and sides were protected by this clumsy metal. Strangely enough, the robbers had not thought of covering their legs, and it was in that vulnerable spot that the chief of the gang was hit. The hotel, within and without, was

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wrapped in darkness when the armed police appeared and opened fire upon it. Unaware of the fact that women and children were prisoners in the hotel, the police poured into the building a deadly fire from their rifles. When it was discovered by the shrieks of the wounded that the innocent were being struck, firing ceased. Then the non-combatants left the building, and the police and the enemy were left to the work. The scene was an anticipation of the Sidney Street affair in London two years ago, when hundreds of police and soldiers laid siege to two anarchists, who held them for a whole day at bay. Despite the rifle-fire, the outlaws did not yield. One of them, indeed—the leader—managed to escape in the darkness. But, reappearing, he was shot in the legs, and his fighting career was over. The other three remained in the house, stubbornly refusing to surrender. Then at last the police decided to set fire to the house, and either burn out or burn up their enemies. When the fire subsided, the charred remains of two of the robbers were discovered amidst the ruins of the building. How they died will never be known. The survivor was taken to Melbourne, condemned to death, and hanged. And on the evening of the day of the execution the sister of the robbers appeared upon the stage of a Melbourne music-hall.

It is an amazing story. Only in the Wild West or in Australia of that day could such a series of events have occurred.

With the passing of the Kellys, bushranging

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practically ceased. It took a long time to calm the nerves of the populace, for it was believed that other scoundrels of the same type were abroad, quite ready to repeat the exploits of the gang recently broken up. All fear has long since departed. That phase of Australian life has disappeared for ever. The people to fear to-day are not bushrangers, but languorous men who dread the discipline of hard work, and who refuse to contribute their share to the making of a great country.

CHAPTER XVI

A SQUATTER'S HOME AND DAUGHTER

It was the first time I had seen a real live squatter and his daughter, and the spectacle produced quite a shock. It was so unexpected, so utterly contrary to all that I had imagined. Every living word conveys an image to the mind of him who employs it, and I had my own notion of what a squatter was. This was derived, at an early age, from reading books on Colonial life, and later from the unflattering description given by Darwin in his "Voyage Round the World." Mr. Darwin described a squatter as "a freed, or ticket-of-leave man, who builds a hut with bark on unoccupied ground, buys or steals a few animals, sells spirits without a licence, receives stolen goods, and so at last becomes rich and turns farmer; he is the horror of all his honest neighbours."

Now, such a person is hardly to be desired as an acquaintance, and when I went out to Australia I firmly determined to give any squatter that I might encounter as wide a berth as possible. But time brought disillusionment. I began to see persons in Melbourne who were pointed out to me as retired squatters. They were gentlemanly in appearance, splendidly dressed, well-mannered; they stayed at

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the best hotels, and some of them went to church. I began to hear stories of wonderful mansions, splendidly furnished, of sons and daughters going to the university, and the like, and the truth gradually dawned upon me that there must be squatters *and* squatters; and that in squatting, as in everything else, there had been some remarkable developments.

And then I met this girl, and the truth stood revealed. She was of Scotch descent, and her grandfather, having come from the Highlands of Scotland and settled upon the land, had made a fortune, which had passed into the hands of his son, and this girl's father. I met her in the drawing-room of a Free Church elder; she was staying in the house as his guest. Beyond the fact of possessing a rosy complexion, which advertised perfect health, gained through an outdoor life, there was absolutely nothing to indicate that this girl had been born and reared in the wilds of Australia, far away from human habitation. She was dressed in the smartest style; she had just finished a boarding-school education in one of our large cities; she could drive a motor-car with any chauffeur, and she was as much at home in a modern city drawing-room as she had been on that vast homestead in the far-away north.

I confess myself to have been astonished with this amazing blend of a perfect child of Nature and a perfect woman of the world. Were Darwin still with us, he would have to rewrite his description of a squatter.

This girl unveiled to us the secrets of her bush

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home. She told us a story of life that sounded almost incredible. Reclining upon a deck-chair, she laughingly poured out a stream of talk about that northern home of hers. So remote from our life did hers seem to be, that one might have been excused for believing that, by some chance or other, she had really come down from Mars. Far away in the north-west corner of Australia lies the estate upon which this child was born and reared, and to which, her term of schooling being over, she has now returned. Her father's land consists of a trifling *two million acres*—that is all. Think of it—two million acres! There is no exaggeration about the figures. And all this land in the hands of one man! Being quick at figures, I began at once to calculate how many homesteads of liberal size might be founded upon a territory so vast as this. How many small towns might be created! How many industries spring into being! How many congested areas in the great cities of England might be relieved by means of a population transferred to these enormous spaces! Two million acres! It takes a little time for the idea to soak into the mind.

The nearest railway station to this homestead is 219 miles away. Formerly the journey between the station and the home occupied three days, by carriage or horse. The camel train occupied a longer time. Now, even in that remote region, the motor-car has arrived, and the time of transit has been reduced to one day. The nearest post-office is more than thirty miles distant, while the next-door neighbour lives twenty miles

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away. What solitude! What terrible isolation! And yet to that family and its staff of servants and shepherds and shearers there is no solitude, no sense of isolation. They live in a world of their own; they are self-contained. The estate has its own butcher's shop, its own bakery, its own smithy, its own carpenters—all it needs it possesses. No daily newspaper appears to distract their attention. The strife of the political world, the changes of the social world never disturb them. The mail arrives at certain periods, bringing newspapers a few days old. But what is news to them, who are too far removed from society to be affected by aught that goes on? I was curious to know in what aspect life presented itself to people who were removed from the haunts of men so far as were they. Did life drag? Did monotony oppress them? How did they employ their time? What about culture? And the answer was very clear and emphatic. They knew nothing of monotony; they suffered no fear of loneliness. Every hour brought its task—there was no time for moping. The cattle had to be fed, watched, slaughtered, bred, bought and sold. The sheep were sheared. The fields were made to yield their increase. Sons, daughters, and servants were all engaged in their respective work.

And what of recreation and social interchange? "Ah!" was the laughing answer, "we have the best time in the world—a time we would not exchange for all the cities could offer us." For one thing, there is the chase. The daughters of that "station" are ac-

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complished horsewomen. They think nothing of undertaking a 500-mile ride over enormous stretches of country. The side-saddle for girls is scorned; they ride like the men. They leave home, bound for a long scamper. They take no provisions with them; they simply ride on until they reach another "station," where they put up as long as they please. The laws of hospitality in those remote parts are Oriental in character. No invitations are issued, no requests are proffered. The "station" keeps open house; when a visitor arrives, he or she shares the hospitality of the establishment without question and without payment. In that scattered world the advent of any visitor is welcome. Even the "sundowner," or tramp, easily finds accommodation. He may eat at the common table in the kitchen, and sleep on a "stretcher," or, if he prefers it (as he generally does), he may take his repose amongst the straw or hay.

After the chase, the race. The sport of horse-racing, beloved of the Australians, is not lacking in that remote corner of the north-west. It is conducted, however, without the glamour of the ring and the grand stand, and without the pestiferous presence of the bookie. The horse-race up there is a real race of horses for the pure pleasure of the race. Neighbours for 100 miles around ride in and bring their best horses to the contest. For a week the homestead is plunged in festivity. The race is an excuse for good fellowship and for paying calls. There is more than one race. Station after station is utilised as a place of meeting, and thus friends and neighbours,

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despite the distance that divides them, continually come together. Then there are social festivities : the ball, the amateur play, the party, the concert. It is all amateur, all primitive, all natural, and all wholesome.

But the greatest pleasure of all is afforded by Nature itself. To a city man like myself that remote corner of the world, entirely hidden from the ken of the ordinary person, would be oppressive by its silence, its solitude, its aloofness from life. To the squatter's daughter this solitude is peopled by wonderful races; this silence is broken by numberless voices. With modern literature she has but a bowing acquaintance; of Australian politics she hears but a murmur; of the vast world movements beyond she knows nothing. As we speak of these things she listens with a certain acquiescence. She has heard something of it all—a mere sigh borne upon the breeze—but uninterpreted by her. There is no quick response. That world is not her world. Emerging from the wild into the atmosphere of a boarding-school for a brief year or two, she returns to that same wild with enough of polish and general knowledge to ensure that certain rays of modern light shall penetrate the fastnesses of her distant abode.

The moment she begins to speak of her world she becomes eloquent; it is I who feel an ignoramus. For this girl is a true child of Nature, who understands her mother perfectly. She speaks to me of insects of which I know nothing more than any book of natural history can tell me. But she can teach

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the professors of natural history a few things. There is not a bird, not a beast, nor an insect of the bush but she knows thoroughly. She can trace the white ant from the larva to the carpenter which bores out with its teeth the interior of table and wardrobe. She knows every note of that eternal humming with which the forest and the glade resound. She can name every bird that flies within fifty miles of her home. She knows the habitat and the habits of all winged and walking and crawling creatures. Nobody has taught her; all has come through persistent observation.

With difficulty I get her to speak of certain adventures of which the rumours had already reached me. At last, with diffidence, she relates them. She tells how she started a rabbit, raced it, doubled back when it doubled, and finally caught it, killing it with a blow from her hand—a soft blow delivered in a vital spot. She speaks of an adventure with “the naughty, wicked dingo,” which worried the sheep. She and a younger sister mounted each a horse, and proceeded to enclose the dingo, chasing it from place to place, until at last it was brought to bay, and forthwith dispatched with a blow from a stick. This little, frail-looking girl did this. She does not boast of it; she merely recounts the deed at my request. And her eyes blaze at the recital. She can speak with wondrous eloquence about that world of Nature, whose secrets she has so well learned.

This is the squatter’s daughter. It is the first time I have encountered her like. The remembrance

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will live with me. She represents a type quite distinct on the earth. She comes into city life with a breeze from the bush, a vision of glory from afar. And now she is back in the wild, taming horses, running races, or playing on the piano the airs she learned in the city.

CHAPTER XVII

THE HARDSHIPS OF THE BUSH

HE was the first of a large number of young fellows who came to me asking for an introduction to some employer or other in the city—an Englishman, of course, newly arrived from the Old Country and in search of work. Unable to find a suitable billet at home, he had converted all his available possessions into cash and had set out for Australia, that El Dorado in which men were reputed to pick up gold and to rise, with incredible swiftness, to fortune. He was a young fellow of excellent education and of good address, a typical member of the clerk class. But he had never received any technical education, and he had no "trade" to fall back upon. Alas! he found that men of that class have as great a difficulty in obtaining billets here as they have in the Old Country. He arrived in the slack season, when employees are not in demand. Not an office, not a warehouse open to him. He advertised in vain, and day after day knocked at numerous office doors, always to be met with the same reply, "Sorry; no vacancy." There were plenty of openings on the land, but he exposed his fine hands, saying, as he did so, "These were not made for that kind of work."

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The weeks ran on, and no opening occurred. The stock of money he had brought out was becoming smaller every day. It was evident that something must be done. And then came the opportunity. It was an opportunity he would have scorned had his capital been larger. But hunger was beginning to threaten him, and he seized the first chance that came his way. This fine young Englishman, with the fair hands and the semi-aristocratic drawl, was invited to go north, a few degrees nearer the equator than Melbourne, and try his fortune on a newly established "station." The promises made were not over-attractive from the point of view of comfort. Of dainties none might be expected. Even starched linen might be banished from the young man's life. The railway was more than two hundred miles away from the "station," and the nearest neighbour resided at a distance of six miles. Each man must be his own servant. And, in fine, the life promised was altogether of a rough type.

The young fellow showed me the invitation, and I advised him to accept it. And then, one afternoon, he left Melbourne on the steamer and went up north-west. I hardly expected to see him again. But it happened that, a year later, I paid a visit to Adelaide, and lo ! there was my friend, newly returned from the bush. The life in the north had proved too much for him, and he had come down to Adelaide, where at last he obtained an excellent situation. The young man I saw in Adelaide, however, was a very different young man from the one I saw in Melbourne. Those

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few months had wrought a marvellous change in him. The old *hauteur* had disappeared; the face and neck were bronzed, and even burned; the fair white hands had grown slightly larger, and they were rough and scarred with many a cut and bruise. Ten months in the bush had wrought an extraordinary transformation in his life, and he was grateful to be back again in civilisation. The bush life, he declares, was his salvation. It destroyed his old ideas of labour, and opened up to him a new vista. It made him more human, and distinctly more grateful. Yet he wishes to leave it in his mind as the memory of a nightmare through which he had passed. It was a remarkable and touching story that he told me. When he quitted the train at the point nearest to his destination, he was compelled to bid farewell to that atmosphere of comfort and civilisation in which he had been reared. The road soon ended, and he was trundled off in a primitive conveyance through the bush. A river had to be crossed, hills had to be mounted. He found himself in the midst of an immense solitude. For several days he pushed on with his two companions. At night they lay on the ground, covered with a kind of sacking. Not a human sound broke the awful stillness. In the early morning a chorus of laughing jackasses woke the sleepers, who, after a modest meal, resumed their journey. Everywhere overhead was the eternal gum-tree, and underneath the "scrub." Parrots flew around them screaming and fighting; strange birds looked down upon them, and strange animals fled at their approach.

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And then, one day, the station came in view. It was managed by a company of men. Not a woman lived there. The quarters were rough and primitive. Not a luxury anywhere. Food was consumed at a rough table. Ablutions were performed at a rough lavatory. The beds, or stretchers, were simplicity itself. Guns were in evidence for the shooting of birds. The larder contained a stock of tinned stuffs and tea—always tea, that everlasting drink of the Australians. And outside the house stood the “billy,” nearly always in use for the brewing of the beverage. There was a cook, who did his work very well, and of provisions there was a sufficiency. And into this rough spot came the Englishman with the white hands and the gentle ways.

The first night he never slept. He sent “his soul into the invisible” but well-known land he had left. And there came to his mind the fair picture of an English summer, then on the wane. He trod again the streets he knew so well, and saluted in vision the friends with whom he had formerly companied. In the old town he had left there was the electric car in which he rode to business (while there was a business to go to) every day. He saw the sea, on whose border he had lived. He went home again that night. And then, when the day broke, he rose to face this new and hard life in the midst of which he felt himself to be an exile, an outcast.

There were trees to be cut down, wood to be sawn, roots to be grubbed up, loads to be hauled, water to be drawn, earth to be ploughed, and food to be

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gathered. The white hands soon became brown; the face and neck were scorched through exposure to a sun which every day became hotter; and in a few days great blisters appeared on the soft hands, now rapidly becoming harder. For a time work had to be suspended on account of the sores, which caused great pain. Added to this a multitude of mosquitoes and flies began to be troublesome, stinging the sensitive flesh and causing great irritation and swelling. And all the time the heat was growing more intense. One day, in the midst of summer, the thermometer reached the abnormal height of 120 degrees Fahrenheit. And in that sweltering atmosphere work went on as usual, until at last Nature rebelled, and the young fellow fell sick for a few days. When well the work was resumed from early morning until sunset. No eight hours' day there. It was all work, save on the day reserved for washing and rest, the washing being regarded as somewhat of a recreation.

There came a day when the cry of "Fire!" was raised. A volume of smoke in the distance announced the commencement of a dreaded bush fire. The fierce heat of the sun had kindled the dry brushwood and the scrub, and the flame burst forth. Never, to his dying day, will that Englishman forget the terrible scene. The whole country seemed to be a sea of fire. With incredible swiftness the tongues of fire leaped from bush to bush, licking up everything they encountered, and scarring the giant gum-trees in their fiery embrace. The business of the men on the

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station was to prevent the fire from attacking their homestead and consuming in an hour the work of months. Part of the scrub was deliberately fired, and thus a portion of land was cleared around the house. When the flames reached the fences they were beaten down with sticks and bags, and thus the fire swept by, leaving the house untouched. It was a thrilling moment, and every man sang his *Te Deum* when the danger was past. For a long time, at least, they were secure from a bush fire. The scrub would be some time in growing again, and so long as the fire spared homestead and life of man and beast, it proved to be, ultimately, a friend rather than an enemy, for it accomplished in a few hours a work of clearance which it would have taken men many months to perform.

Some men are not made for bush life, and this Englishman was of their number. The life proved too hard, too monotonous, too crushing for his spirits. The promise of ultimate success and even fortune was not sufficiently alluring to detain him longer in exile, and one day he retrod the forest pathway, gained the railway, and by it came to Adelaide, where he cried for very joy to find himself once again in the midst of the busy world. The bush adventure has had a curative effect upon this young man's life. It has broken to pieces his "softness," and given him an insight into another kind of life of which formerly he knew nothing. It will probably prevent him from ever again looking contemptuously upon any man who is compelled to work with his hands. And I

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observed that the semi-aristocratic drawl was considerably modified.

This story may serve another purpose. It may prevent young men who have learned no trade from venturing into a new country in the belief that fortunes are picked up without difficulty. The failures I have met with in Australia have been generally of the men who "could do anything," for that, being interpreted, means that they can do nothing well. A new country requires men who can do something—perhaps but one thing—well. And I would earnestly advise any young man who purposes going out to learn a trade before he goes. The skilled man can generally find an opening. There are already too many native-born Australians who are unskilled workmen, and to add to their number from afar would be a fatal error. It is necessary to say this, for several young Englishmen who have called upon me at the time of their arrival have had, obviously, no chance whatever to get on, for the reason that they had learned no trade. It will be a great day for England when a technical education is enforced upon young men who are not joining any of the professions. Upon this point even Germany can teach us much.

CHAPTER XVIII

AMONGST THE ABORIGINES

WHEN the first settlers came to Australia they found in possession of the country a black population, representing a humanity low down in the scale. The native population was never in reality so large as many persons have imagined. It is difficult to arrive at exact figures, because in the north there are still large numbers of natives living in a state of practical savagery. These roam about at their will. Where the white man has penetrated, however, the black has gradually receded. When the black adopts "civilised" ways, his already precarious existence becomes yet more precarious. Affecting the white man's vices—the first thing he naturally copies—he speedily runs down the hill and passes off the scene. The native population is being gradually but surely wiped out.

In less than five decades the number of aborigines has been reduced from 1,694 to 652, and this in the State of Victoria alone. At the census of 1901 there were found only 271 natives of pure blood in the State, and 381 of half-castes. At the census of 1911 it was found that the figures had fallen to 196. If in fifty years the decrease in population has been so

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marked and so startling, it requires no prophetic gift to foretell the speedy extinction of the Australian native. A few more years and not a black will be left. That terrible law of the survival of the fittest will again have asserted itself. When, therefore, the opportunity presented itself to me to see one of the three native settlements still left in Victoria, of course I immediately availed myself of it.

Two hours' steady climbing on the railway brings one to Healesville. And four miles from Healesville lies Coranderrk, a Government settlement for the aborigines. Quite off the road lies the colony of seventy men and women. There is no indication of its existence other than what is supplied by a finger-post, which signifies nothing to anyone who does not know what lies behind the name Coranderrk. But the site is ideal for a retired residence. It lies in the centre of a vast amphitheatre of hills, and day and night a profound silence envelops the colony. Never a sound from the outside world penetrates the solitude. The quietness is that of a mausoleum. The race that inhabits it is slowly dying; what more fitting as an accompaniment of death than the solemn stillness which already heralds the eternal stillness of the tomb?

There is more than a suggestion of the American South in this colony. The old men and women, dressed in an odd mixture of British costumes, might well be the originals of some of the characters in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Black skins, grisly hair, and light-coloured garments form a curious compound.

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There is no fashion, no symmetry in any of the garments. Slouch hats of the Wild West, straw hats of Bond Street, and old billycock hats make up the male headgear; while various coloured vests, trousers, coats, and cravats complete the attire.

The log cabins, some twenty in all, which are scattered over the settlement, complete the illusion that, after all, we are in the American South, amongst the negro population. The one dash of modernity is supplied by one or two mulattos—girls—who, clad in becoming white garments, present a really attractive picture. These girls treated us to a little service of song in the humble meeting-house which is the head-quarters of the mission propaganda in the colony. For all these folk understand English—the younger generation nothing but English—and they all attend church. They are docile and happy, save for an occasional row, in which the original vernacular is used with freedom and emphasis. It was touching to hear these girls of the second generation sing simple Sankey hymns, and to reflect that the day must inevitably come when on this Government estate of 2,400 acres there would be no such songs sung by native lips. The younger people marry, and children are born; but the race is surely dying off. Some mixed marriages occur, and the offspring of these are half-castes, who are as little welcomed in the schools as the pure-blooded native children. One of them pathetically remarked to me that they were shunned by the white children. The colour line is as marked here as in America.

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From the point of view of attractiveness the colony has much to recommend it. Pasture land surrounds the houses, and most of the natives keep their own cows. Everything, of course, is exceedingly simple, and it is the simplicity that attracts. Laundry work is done out of doors in a primitive manner. We found one buxom young lady seated lazily by the side of a tub in which her clothes lay soaking. She stretched forth her hands and rubbed her clothes in a style that suggested that any day next week would do to finish them. In a little natural basin on the slope of the hill the water of a rivulet had been collected into a large bath or reservoir, and the youngsters congregated about in a way that showed that they had not lost the instincts of their fathers for water gymnastics. One very modern touch appeared in the shape of three irregular pieces of wood arranged as cricket stumps. It was a species of cricket one might without difficulty have imagined prehistoric man to have played at. For bat, the youth of Coranderrk employed part of a boomerang.

That word reminds me of the remarkably clever display given to us by the natives of boomerang throwing. The boomerang is an innocent-looking weapon which the ignorant would never suspect could be applied to dangerous work. In appearance it resembles a rude Tee-square, and each side is about a foot long. Thrown by an ignorant Briton like myself the weapon merely careers along the ground for a space of thirty or forty feet and nothing further happens, save the ironical laughter of the natives,

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who receive a demonstration that even a Briton does not know everything. But when the native throws it, the weapon accomplishes wonders. It suddenly becomes alive. It defies all general laws. The black sends the wood from him in a straight direction, but lo! it whistles and sings and describes circles in the air like a bird, and then suddenly descends to the earth in a vertical direction, landing at the very place from which it was projected. When we saw how easily the thing was done, we all caught the fever and became boomerang throwers. Lawyer, doctor, parson, and merchant stood in the field and went back in an instant to the primitive hunting ways of the savage. The boomerang is an ugly instrument to play with, however. After a flight of thirty seconds, during which it gains momentum, it descends like lightning, sometimes where it is not wanted. The doctor threw his boomerang with such precision that it returned twice and struck him violently on the hand—the hand that had thrown it. If boomerang throwing were introduced into England it would become a perfect craze. It would completely eclipse the diabolo craze. But then it would be necessary to increase the number of surgeons and ambulance men, for a blow from a boomerang might inflict serious damage.

Another native custom was shown to us, and proved to be most fascinating. It was the art of the fire-stick. Here, under our eyes, was exposed the primitive way of obtaining fire. The apparatus looked most unpromising. It consisted of a piece of

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soft wood about a foot long and six inches wide, a piece of dry fibre, and a short, narrow cane made of hard wood. Placing the cane between the palms of his two hands, the operator swiftly turned it into the soft wood beneath with a friction so powerful that the cane pierced the wood, causing it to smoke. The air, blowing through the hole thus made, fanned the spark which, falling upon the dry fibre beneath, set it on fire. Thus in one minute, by simple friction, a fire equal to any kindled by a match was blazing. The process was picturesque and exciting. In that group of darkies gathered round a piece of wood, a handful of fibre, and a hard cane, we beheld primitive man engaged in the task of kindling his fire. It was, for the moment, ancient history incarnate. And when it was over, a member of our party, drawing forth a box of vestas, remarked, "Good old Bryant and May." He remembered his mercies, and was thankful.

The one pathetic scene of the afternoon's visit was our encounter with the "King" of the natives. From the distance we observed a venerable figure approaching. As he came nearer we perceived a brass plate suspended by a chain around his neck. The apparition resembled, for all the world, a *facchino* of an Italian railway station—brass plate and all. Inscribed upon the tablet was this legend :

ANTHONY ANDERSON,
King of Birchup.

And this was the deposed chief of the district, van-

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quished by the white man, chased out of his patrimony, and reduced to the proportions of an exile! I could not discover the native name of the ancient chief; it was certainly *not* Anthony Anderson. Nor could I discover why he had assumed the name of Anderson. He was a truly pathetic figure. Skin black as coal, his hair and beard were nearly white. The odd costume he affected served only to set off the antiquity of his own person. An ancient pair of light trousers, no longer white; a begreased coat; a flaming red tie with the flame expiring, and a shapeless billycock hat dyed through and through with grease—such was his dress. The old man wept as he told us that all the friends of his youth were dead: he alone was left. Once, in the long ago, he was an agile chief, master of all that great stretch of property around the hills. But the white man came, and his reign was over. All that remains to him is a memory of the past, and a quiet asylum for the few remaining months or years of his life. The king wept as he recited his story, and then—bathos! he asked for a *pourboire*—and got it. But, then, *all* kings get their “tips,” some in one way, some in another. And Anthony Anderson, King of Birchup, was primitive in his manner of asking—that is all.

CHAPTER XIX

THE GOLDEN CITIES

TWO cities of Australia lay claim to the designation of the "Golden City"—Ballarat and Bendigo. Needless to say that the cities are rivals, and needless further to say that I am not so foolish a man as to enter into any dispute as to which is the better city.

Both cities have been very kind to me, and each of them has its own peculiar charm. Ballarat is built upon an eminence many hundreds of feet above the sea level, while Bendigo is built upon a plain, and is, therefore, a much warmer place than Ballarat. In both places gold has been discovered to an enormous extent, and to-day each city calls itself the golden city. And there, from that point of view, my interest in the matter ends.

* * * * *

It was in 1851 that the first gold was found in Bendigo; and, like so many other things, it was discovered by accident. A man named Johnston simply stooped and picked up a nugget of gold, the glitter of which attracted him. Then some shepherds saw gold in the roots of a large tuft of grass which had been washed by the waters of the creek. And

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with that accidental find the fortunes of Bendigo were made. A desolate region, uninhabited, became in an incredibly short space of time a flourishing city. Like lightning the news travelled that gold had been found in Bendigo, and at once there was a rush from all parts of inhabited Australia and from the uttermost ends of the earth. "Claims" were measured off to the new-comers, and the desolate plain became a camp of fever-stricken men, all intent upon securing as much as possible of the yellow metal that was to make their fortunes. Men endured any hardship in order to compass their end. They scarcely lived; theirs was a bare existence. All they cared for was the amassing of gold; and when they were satisfied, or when they had exhausted their "claim," they went back to the ordinary ways of life—some of them set up for life, others to squander their fortune and to arrive at a last state worse than their first. The Bendigo historian says without exaggeration that gold was dug up almost in bucketfuls. In one morning two young men sank a shallow hole, and extracted from it fifty pounds weight of gold.

The face of the earth was scarred and hacked by pick and shovel until at last it resembled a battlefield, desolate to the last degree. And to-day, on the site of the great struggle at White Hills, there is left a stretch of country filled with sand, and intersected with numerous gullies through which the cleansing water once flowed. And as on battlefields men continually wander in search of relics, so at White Hills the refuse is to-day subjected to a cyaniding process

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by means of which the last morsel of gold is compelled to yield itself up.

A year later gold was discovered in Ballarat.

Until that year the country as far as Sydney, was a gigantic sheep-walk. Houses were few and far between. The inhabitants of the country around Ballarat could have been counted quite easily by a child had one chanced to light upon them. But in a moment, when the magic word "gold" was pronounced, men sprang, as it were, from the abyss. Hundreds of fragile tents covered the ground; hundreds of tools were busily employed in digging for the enriching ore. A township arose, as by miracle, followed by a city, ever extending its borders, until to-day there is left, as the result of sixty years' work, one of the most beautiful cities of Australia. "Ballarat the beautiful" they name it, and with justice. It is beautiful. Beautiful for situation! Its altitude is 1,500 feet above sea level. Snow falls in the winter-time when at Melbourne the feathers of the sky never descend. In the summer, when Melbourne is grilling in the heat, Ballarat remains with a temperate atmosphere. In this springtide the great boulevard is a flower-garden entrancing and perfumed. The streets are clean and wide—very wide—and everywhere imposing buildings stand. Temples of prayer, fine piles of commercial houses, schools and colleges, institutes, libraries, hospitals, and, above all, statuary adorn the city. In the mayor's room of the Town Hall is an old print showing Ballarat in 1852, the year of the gold fever. Not a house was then erected.

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The countryside is shown dotted with canvas abodes. A decade later, a second print shows a large and flourishing town, laid out after the best models. And the last photograph reveals a modern, busy city, full of life and prosperity. It seems to be a dream, this sudden rise to power. Fifty years leave a city fresh, with the marks of its making still upon it. Ballarat, young in years, has somehow acquired the dignity and solidity of a city twice its age. In the old land I used to imagine these cities to be of the mushroom type—hastily grown, and with the mark of premature decay upon them. They are far from that. Ballarat, type of the gold-made city, is substantial, and it is built to abide. Another illusion cherished in the old days was that cities such as this, having sprung out of filthy lucre, must of necessity possess the mark of vulgarity. Ballarat shatters that illusion, for with all its material prosperity it possesses an air of refinement that cannot be mistaken. A high standard of education is sought. There is a School of Mines, there are fine colleges, there are scientific and literary societies, and there is an Eisteddfod. And this last thing is self-revealing. It means that in some way or other Welsh influence has been at work. And the number of Welshmen in Ballarat is explanatory of the Eisteddfod. With pride, Ballarat people call their city the Athens of Australia. All that is beautiful and artistic is encouraged. Annual competitions are held for the youth of both sexes, and at these there is wholesome rivalry in song, music, dramatic representations, literature, art, on the mental side, while

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upon the physical side the games are held after the manner of the ancient city which Ballarat would fain copy. To the golden city come, annually, musicians, singers, reciters, and wrestlers from all parts of the Commonwealth. Trophies, prizes, and money are awarded to the winners. The judges are brought from England at enormous fees to adjudicate in the competitions. To quote the words of a municipal enthusiast, who is speaking sober truth, "a prize won at Ballarat is the antipodean equivalent in actual distinction to a trophy won at the Olympian games at Athens, with the difference that in our festival the athlete gives pride of place to the young artist in music and elocution." From all of which it may justly be inferred that a city built upon gold mines is not necessarily a vulgar and a bloated city, having a population whose one ambition is the worship of the golden calf. It is a happy task to bear this witness.

But the crowning taste of Ballarat is in its statuary. There is no other city in the Southern Hemisphere that can boast of so many beautiful carved figures as Ballarat. The main street of the city is adorned with statues, amongst which is one of Moore and another of Burns. The most imposing of all is the statue of Queen Victoria crowned as Queen and Empress. Burns and Moore, Scotsman and Irishman, are not to monopolise the honours of the poets. Place is to be made for a statue of Shakespeare. Then happiness will reign, unless the Welshmen demand a place. But they have the living

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Eisteddfod. In the Botanical Gardens there are a number of figures, the most beautiful of which is the group by Benzone, "The Flight from Pompeii." It is a wonderful conception. Life-like are the mother, the father and the child, seeking escape from the terrible rain of dust which falls upon them. The husband shields the mother with a mantle, while she, in turn, protects the face of her infant from the pitiless fire flakes which threaten her little one. It is a group of which any city in the world might be proud.

Ballarat is thus the destruction of an illusion—the contradiction of the doctrine that a golden city must be vulgar and self-assertive. The people respect all who in any way contribute to the good of the community. I went up to lecture there, and lo! before I was aware of what had happened, I found myself "received" by the mayor, the town clerk, some of the councillors, and most of the clergy. It was embarrassing—and they honoured their visitor simply because it is their way to show respect to any man who, in their judgment, has a word of helpfulness to speak to the community. And that function over, behold, at the door of the Town Hall was a motor-car in which I was whisked round to be shown the sights. And all that for a Free Church minister who had come to lecture to one congregation!

In the matter of appreciative open-mindedness Australia has much to teach the mother country. Her sons listen heartily to any man who brings a living message to them, independently of his creed or his

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political opinions. 'A land without a State Church does lend itself to liberty.

This, then, is the golden city of to-day. But the making of the city is a veritable romance. All Ballarat knows its history, yet there is but one solitary man alive who has *seen* it all from the beginning. The sole survivor of the pioneers of 1851 is Mr. James Oddie. Each year, on September 1, it has been the custom of the survivors to have a banquet in commemoration of the discovery of gold in Ballarat. As the years have advanced the number of attendants at the banquet have declined, until on September 1, 1910, Mr. Oddie alone remained. But he had the banquet just the same. It was a one-man affair. In a room at the hotel dinner was served in great state for *one*. The guest and host in one was very cheerful. Not a soul save himself touched the meal. Waiters thoughtfully and longingly looked on while the veteran ate. Afterwards he gave a speech to the Pressmen intended for the world beyond, and in that he recalled the story of the founding of Ballarat. Melancholy meal! Mr. Oddie, it goes without saying, is an old man, and it cannot be long before the annual banquet will end for ever.

The story of the golden city is one of the romances of the world. A deserted vale, flanked by beautiful hills, was in a day converted into a camp of fever-stricken people—"yellow fever," as it is sarcastically styled. From all parts of Australia, from New Zealand, from Tasmania, and from Europe thousands of adventurous spirits found their way to Ballarat. The

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first comers marked out their "claims," and forthwith entered into them to dig up the precious metal. Thirty ounces of gold per day was the capture of that earliest party. Like the lepers of Samaria, these fortunate men desired to keep to themselves the news of the great find. But the inevitable newspaper man came on the spot, and within a few hours a Geelong newspaper had given the secret to the whole world, much to the chagrin of certain of the explorers, who foresaw a distribution amongst many of a treasure they would fain keep for themselves. In less than a fortnight after the news had been made public "three men were left in Geelong and half Melbourne was on the gold-field." Within three weeks guns were brought up by a small band of soldiers, and the scramble for gold was converted into commercial "prospecting" on licence issued by the Commissioners. The Church followed the Commissioners, and in a month's time a Methodist church was erected. For walls there were the trunks of trees, for roof a piece of tarpaulin.

The springtide was in full beauty; the weather was settled, hence the primitive church was sufficient for the needs of the people. Great nuggets of gold were unearthed, some of them weighing 134 and 126 ounces. Fortunes were made in a day. Curious stories are told of the effect of digging. The Wesleyan church sank bodily into the ground as the result of undermining. The court house also suffered wreckage. It was a mad rush by men unpractised in mining, hence accidents and submergences were fre-

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quent. The amount of gold found in Ballarat in fifty years was 19,375,000 ounces. The surface gold has been worked out long ago, and now deep shafts are sunk, at the bottom of which men work while water is sprayed upon them. It is said that fabulous wealth still remains to be discovered in Ballarat, which for long enough will retain the title of the Golden City. The one and only battle Australia has ever known between white men was fought at Ballarat in connection with the gold-finding. The raising of the price of the gold-tax incensed some of the diggers, who became riotous, and the Government sent up from Melbourne detachments of two British regiments. On Sunday morning, December 3, 1854, soldiers and diggers fought. Life was lost on both sides, the diggers suffering more heavily than the soldiers. On the outskirts of Ballarat a monument is erected to the memory of the fighters. Blood and gold: they have always gone together, and although little blood was shed at Ballarat, there was enough of it to keep unbroken the tradition that the lust of gold means the loss of something human. Many a man made a rapid fortune in the early days of Ballarat. Those halcyon times have passed away. Never again can the old conditions and the old fever be repeated.

Governments are wiser to-day than formerly. They do not throw away their gold or their land to adventurers. The law of honest work is beginning to apply. Our youth can no longer wander into the world and pick up nuggets of gold at will. Some of them try and do this in a modern way by prospecting

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at gambling. That folly must also pass. The world will only be happy and fraternal when its gold fever has passed, and when honest work of brain or hand shall have taken its place.

It was at Bendigo that I had the new experience of descending a gold mine. In almost any part of the world one may descend a coal mine, but a gold mine is much rarer, and when the opportunity was offered of seeing the conditions under which the most precious of all metals is extracted from the earth, I naturally embraced it immediately.

Once upon a time, within living memory, fifty years ago, there was no need to penetrate deeply into the bowels of the earth to discover gold. It lay upon the surface and just beneath it.

Rarely are surface nuggets found to-day; the country has been so thoroughly scoured. But exceptions occur, and as I write there is a note in the daily papers to the effect that a man picked up a nugget of gold last week worth £500. There may be yet another rush to that neighbourhood.

Deeper and deeper the mines have been sunk. When the surface and the sub-surface had yielded all their precious secrets, men went ever farther down in search of the yellow metal. Sometimes the mines were a failure and the owners of shares were glad enough to give away their shares, or to sell them at ridiculous prices, rather than pay the continual "calls" made upon them. One man, whose name to-day is intimately associated with Bendigo, found a

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fortune in this way. He was entreated by a disappointed shareholder to buy shares at sixpence each. It seemed like throwing money away to buy even at that price, for the mine was exhausted. Yet he bought them, and then, in a moment, the tide turned and gold was discovered in the exhausted mine, and the almost penniless man who had bought shares for which he could scarcely pay, became a semi-millionaire. Such are the fortunes of the gold-field. The mine we descended was 2,100 feet deep. The shaft, top gear and cage resembled those of a coal mine, save that the wheels over the shaft were less than half the size of those of an English coal-pit. And, of course, there was an absence of the grime associated with a coal mine. We had to divest ourselves of all our ordinary garments and to don a costume which for the time gave us rank amongst tramps. Armed with a candle, we entered the cage, and descended. The journey seemed interminable. For more than two minutes we were slowly dropping through the shaft, enveloped in a profound darkness, and subjected to a perpetual baptism of water which rained upon us. There are times when seconds seem like minutes, and minutes like hours. And the two minutes and a half we were in that cage, suspended by a slender steel rope, seemed a small eternity.

The temperature at the bottom was nearly 80 deg. Fahrenheit, and we were compelled to remove all clothing, save our trousers. In a few minutes we had entered upon the experience of a Turkish bath; streams of perspiration ran down our bodies. When-

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ever we lighted upon a group of miners we saw that they also were living in a perpetual bath. Nearly stripped, great beads of perspiration stood out on their flesh. "We are used to it, sir," said one of them cheerfully, but I learned that for some of them this "use" meant disease and death—largely through want of care when they brought their overheated bodies to the surface. Along well-built corridors we tramped, holding our lighted candles ahead of us. No danger in the gold mine of that terrible fire-damp which is so fatal to coal miners. But in the gold mine there is another danger like that which threatens colliers; that of falling masses of mineral. We came to one place where on the previous day, without warning, a hundred tons of rock and quartz had fallen. Happily, no man was injured; but it is not always so. When our turn came to crawl along on hands and knees, surrounded by angry-looking rock possessing sinister-looking gaps, the perspiration did not decrease in volume. It seemed as if a single touch would suffice to bring down a hundred tons weight upon our fragile backs. The danger is always present despite every precaution taken to ensure safety. Blasting continually goes on, and then the danger is at its height.

Let me confess to a feeling of disappointment. In a coal mine the black diamonds glisten under one's eyes. There is no faith required to believe in the presence of coal. The seams are there, and all that is necessary is to dislodge the coal, load it in trucks and convey it to the surface. It is otherwise in the gold

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mine. In my simplicity I was looking out for nuggets, as men used to do on the surface. Alas! we saw not so much as the ghost of a nugget. To our untrained eyes there was not the suspicion of gold anywhere. Everywhere we caught the glitter of a yellow substance, which at first we mistook for gold, but which is in reality worthless. The gold is hidden in these vast seams of quartz, which have to be dislodged, brought to the surface, sent to the battery, crushed and washed. And then at last, when the water has ceased flowing over the pulverised mass of sand, the gold is discovered. It is all faith at first. These men justify their business by faith, and then, in the final analysis, justify it by verification. The layman would pass by all this quartz as so much rock or stone. The expert knows that hidden within it is the most desired of all metals. Yet they never know what may be found below. Hence, every man is searched when he reaches the surface. A year or two ago there was a scandal at Bendigo over gold-stealing, and there were found many defenders of the men. Formerly the most ingenious devices were employed by the miners to conceal any gold they had abstracted in the mine. One of the favourite methods was to swallow the metal and to take means later to disgorge it.

It is easy to moralise in a gold mine. Perspiration, discomfort, danger, deprivation of the light of day, an invitation held out to pneumonia, and all for a bit of yellow metal which men have accepted as the basis of exchange! And to-morrow, if a fresh Ben-

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digo were discovered, there would be the same rush and the same risks taken. It is civilisation. And is the world *very* much happier than when men exchanged one useful article for another and when gold was unknown?

After science, Nature once more. Those desolate surfaces at White Hills, plundered of their golden treasure and bequeathed as an eyesore, have been converted. For years they lay despised of all men. The soil was said to be unfruitful. Men resigned themselves to the spectacle of a wilderness. And then came one or two Spaniards who saw visions of gardens in that belated spot. They planted tomatoes, and, lo! the love apple flourished where the desert had reigned. And more, led by the foreigner, whose intrusion was at first resented, the inhabitants of the district are cultivating tomatoes, which grow beautifully on the alluvial soil. Thus the gash made upon the face of Nature by man's spade and pick is slowly healing, and a red growth is obliterating the ugly work of fifty years ago. And so it is ever: the artificial thing goes ever deeper into the darkness, while the beauty of Nature remains a perpetual enchantment. The gashes disappear under our mother's healing touch.

CHAPTER XX

THE MIRACLE OF THE MALLEE

LET no man declare anything to be impossible until he has seen the Mallee; he will then be in a position to affirm the reality of natural miracle wrought with the co-operation of man; he will know that a desert can blossom as the rose, and that the place where jackals lay can become a glorious human habitation. I have just beheld this miracle and now hasten to declare it.

The Mallee is an immense territory embracing about one-quarter of the State of Victoria—that is to say, twelve millions of acres. Until recent years it was regarded as a hopeless wilderness. In the early 'eighties a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the possibilities of this dreaded country. Their report was dismal to the last degree. The wise and learned men declared that the aspect of the country was that of a wilderness in the strictest sense of the word! sand, scrub and mallee below, the scorching sun and blue sky above, and not a sound of life to break the solemn silence. In a journey of 100 miles from north to south the Commission did not encounter a solitary bird or a single living creature. The only evidence of animal life was the barked stems of

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stunted scrub and bushes where the rabbit had once fed, and the dead carcasses of a few dingoes which the trappers had snared or poisoned. As for water, all that could be discovered over an area of a few thousands of square miles was a few native wells, a small lagoon or two and one or two muddy water-holes. Throughout the entire region there was no grass.

Such a country was pronounced to be hopeless, and more than once the question was asked in Parliament: "Is the Mallee worth saving?"

It is a little difficult to convey to an English reader what is meant by "scrub." It must be seen to be understood. But some idea of it may be gained if the reader can imagine an interminable country as big as four or five of the largest English counties put together, and this country covered with a dense undergrowth through which no man unaided could possibly force his way. A country absolutely flat, with not so much as a ghost of a hill to serve as a landmark. Not a track ever made by human feet. Scrub so thick that a man passing into it even for a short distance would need the device of a piece of string fastened to a tree at the place of entrance and by means of which alone he could find his way out again. That was the Mallee of forty years ago. More than one man set himself the task of conquering this wilderness. In every case he had to retire beaten. If he succeeded in clearing a space of ground and planting upon it wheat or vegetables, or raising a few head of sheep or cattle, down came the dingo and the

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rabbit from afar to kill his lambs and consume his green crop, or, if he successfully armed himself against these intruders, the heavens became his foe and refused to shower down the kindly rain. Wild animals, vermin and drought—the settler could not withstand them.

Then came a day when the Government erected a fence of wire netting around an enclosed area of two hundred miles. That was to keep out the dingo and the rabbit, and to give the new settlers a chance of cultivating the ground. Then followed the discovery of water in the heart of the country. Already sixty-three bores have been put down which tap water in an area of 500,000 acres. Later a supply of water has been drawn from the Grampian Hills, eighty miles away, and this is conveyed by means of channels to various settlements in the Mallee. Periodically the huge receptacles at the bottoms of the fields are filled up by this supply. Then the farmers draw it upon their land. The discovery of water in the interior, and the new supply from the Grampians, have helped to solve the problem of the Mallee. The country could not possibly exist upon its rainfall, which averages at the best only fifteen inches per annum. Enclosure and water, then, were the two primary elements in the transformation of this desert. The final element was found in scientific farming. One grand secret lies in frequent fallowing. The soil is so treated that it retains its moisture. "Dry" farming is practised by many, and the results of this process are remarkable. Senator McColl, who has

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made a special study of this particular branch of agriculture, predicts that by means of "dry" farming most of the difficulties of the Mallee will yet be overcome. Barely twenty years have passed since the problem of the Mallee was seriously attacked, and already a miracle has been accomplished. This former desert now produces one-fifth of the entire wheat crop of the State of Victoria, and it is claimed that Mallee wheat is the best in the world. Where twenty years ago or less a hundred acres of land would support only one sheep, to-day five sheep are supplied by two acres. Land that was not worth giving away is now valued at £5 per acre, and prices are rising. The Mallee promises to be the Beulah Land of Victoria. Indeed, the people have become prophets in naming one of their chief townships "Beulah." At the first, the place was named in faith, and when the great drought came "Beulah" seemed to be a ghastly caricature of the actual situation. One poor settler, crushed to the dust by misfortune, yet retained enough waggishness to parody a well-known revival hymn thus :

"We've reached the land of drought and heat
Where nothing grows for us to eat;
For winds that blow with scorching heat
This Beulah land is hard to beat.
O Beulah land, hot Beulah land,
As on the burning soil we stand
We look away across the plains
And wonder why it never rains!"

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That year of drought was terrible. Men were reduced to living on the very minimum of rations. It was only a decade ago, but the recovery has been phenomenal. As the years pass, science will lay for ever the spectre of drought.

It was through this wonderfully fertile country that I had the privilege of motoring in December, 1913. The experience was unique in every way. The hospitality of the people was unbounded. In the small towns there were banquets and receptions given in honour of the "distinguished visitor." Churches and halls were crowded for the sermons and lectures. Farmers drove in by carriage and motor from every point of the compass. An angel from heaven could not have been treated more royally than was a preacher from Melbourne. To my amazement I found in little far-away Beulah the electric light installed in every house. The churches are beautiful little buildings. The streets of the "town" are wide. The shops are modern. The houses are commodious and comfortable. A year ago there was not a garden in the township: to-day every house has a garden. A grass lawn springs up as by magic when once water is laid on.

My tour consisted of an eighty-mile drive through one vast wheat field. As far as the eye could reach in every direction the fields were filled with ripening or ripened wheat. Fields! I said. And what fields! Several of them extended for over half a mile in one direction alone. Farming here is farming. Land is measured by miles rather than by acres.

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The whole process of reaping is modern. The "complete harvester" is in general use over these immense fields. It is a wonderful piece of machinery, completely superseding the old methods of reaping, binding, stacking, etc. The "harvester" does everything. It cuts the wheat, winnows it, fills up one bag with chaff and another with wheat, while the driver moves across the vast space. Automatically, the bags filled with grain are deposited at certain intervals upon the field. When the "harvester" has been over the crop there is nothing more to be done; the wheat is ready for exportation. The perfect climate permits this complete process to be undertaken at a stroke. The wheat is cut when quite ripe and quite dry. It never lies in the fields to be sodden and spoiled by capricious rain, as is often the case in England.

At this harvest season in the Mallee we tasted all the charms of a perfect Australian summer climate. The eucalyptus was putting forth its new, delicate tips of gold and brown—a perfect blend of bush colour. The sky was a deep blue, unrelieved by a fleck of cloud. The air, dry and hot, encompassed us like the breath of a generous oven in which all manner of savoury things were yielding up their odours. This blend of bush perfumes, liberated by the heat of the sun, has a character all its own. The charm is completed by the extreme clearness of the atmosphere, which creates many a sweet illusion of the landscape. On these broad spaces the mirage is frequently seen. At least half a dozen times we were tricked into believing that ahead of us lay a glorious stretch of

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water, when all that awaited us was a particularly dry part of the plain.

Despite the partition of the country amongst farmers, there is an air of solitude in the Mallee that is at times depressing. During our eighty miles run we encountered upon the highway only four living beings, while on the morrow, we encountered not a single human being. Life is confined to the farmsteads, which are scattered. Neighbours are separated by several miles from each other. But these farmhouses were the surprise of our journey. Not one of them is twenty-five years old, yet we found in each the telephone installed. One farmer, at whose generous table we lunched, has his own plant of air gas, and his house is brilliantly illuminated at night. In every house we visited we found a valuable piano : in one case it was a German instrument worth over £100. These are the Mallee farmers who in twenty years or less have compelled this wilderness to blossom as the rose, and who, as the result, have furnished their houses in modern fashion, and with many luxuries. I could not help contrasting many of the farms I know well "at home" with these abodes of comparative luxury in the once desert of Australia.

In some cases the primitive houses and the modern abodes stand side by side. The former, built of rude pine blocks and covered with corrugated iron, represent the struggle and the simplicity of the pioneer days : the latter represent success and comfort. Most of these farmers are deeply religious men. They have not allowed their motor-cars to cheat them out

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of the old-fashioned Sunday. The churches are crowded on Sundays, and it is quite a common sight to behold the chapel yard filled with motors, buggies, cycles, and other means of locomotion. Worshippers come for twenty miles to their central churches. And these Mallee men have not allowed their prosperity to kill their native generous sentiments. They are most generous towards their churches. One small congregation raised £80 last year for foreign mission work. A modification of the tithe system is in operation amongst these good people. They give in "kind" as well as in money. So many bags per hundred of wheat and oats are set aside for sale on behalf of Christian work. It is a primitive but very effective method of giving.

There is another side to the picture. Away on the back blocks are men and women who are more heathen than any persons in Fiji or Samoa. A clergyman in the Mallee told me that he had visited people in distant places of the Mallee who had not even seen a church for more than eighteen years. These families grow up in complete ignorance of religion. One child of twelve years of age was brought in to the "town" to become a mother: later her sister, a child of fourteen, followed her for the same purpose. My friend discovered that these children, brought up amongst the animals, scarcely knew the name of God. Their moral sense was unawakened. There are therefore drawbacks to a garden which has sprung out of the desert.

CHAPTER XXI

THE ANNUAL SHOWS

ONCE a year, at least, each Australian State gives demonstrable evidence, in the most attractive manner, of its natural wealth. Every State has its annual Agricultural "Show" to which all loyal people pay homage, for a display of the stock and the produce of a country is more than a pastime, it is a revelation of power and possibilities. Here is an immense tract of country, covering thousands of square miles. Less than a century ago it was a wild "bush" covered with the gum tree and every variety of undergrowth. Less than fifty years ago only a mere fraction of the space was "cleared" for agricultural purposes. Slowly the work of preparing the soil has advanced. So far as the great outside world is concerned the cultivation of the country has proceeded in silence. No person without special knowledge of the march of events could have dreamed that progress has been so marked as the issue has revealed it to be. Only when the total results are massed together in a great "Show" is it possible to understand how marvellous has been the rate of progress. Canada has long called, with alluring voice, to the Old Country to come and aid its progress and share its wealth. Australia has now

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called to the old world. These vast spaces must be filled, not with fools in search of an easy berth, but with strong, earnest men and women who will co-operate with Nature in fructifying the earth.

It was that I might behold with my own eyes what the Commonwealth had already done in conquering the soil, and that I might also help to make the old Mother at home open her eyes to the facts, that I attended five of Australia's "Shows."

They were impressive, great, revealing. From every part of the States machinery and produce had been sent. It was a veritable panorama of a young country's life and effort. Wheels, still and in motion—the work of man. Life, still and in motion—the work of God. It was quite a serious show. There were few amusements in it. People who attended it in thousands went to pay homage to the manhood of the country. It was the life of a young nation, under this attractive guise, that received the universal salutation. All this work was Australia's own. The vast mass of machinery and implements were fabricated in Australia's workshops. True the Old Country had a share in the exhibits, but not a great share. There were imports, but not many. America, too, always ready to capture Poles, or equators, or anything else, was represented amongst the machines. But the significant thing was that the greater part of the machinery and implements were made by Australians. The child has grown up, and got to work, and the old Mother hardly realises what he is doing so far away.

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To take the machinery first. Here were engines, threshing-machines, mowers, ploughs, harrows, planters, seed-sowers, rollers, hoes, pumps, forges, grinders, separators, tanks, stoves, fire-fighters, and hundreds of other agricultural implements "too numerous to mention," as the consecrated phrase runs, such as one would find in any English agricultural show. But there were others peculiar to Australia. For example, fly-proof tents, window fly-screens, rabbit poisoners, poison carts, all suggestive of Australian conditions. Of the rabbit poisoners I know next to nothing, save that the farmers are compelled to resort to strong measures in order to exterminate these pests of the land. But of the flies I am beginning to learn, by experience, a little. How grateful these fly-proof screens and tents appeared! Flies are already appearing in alarming numbers, and we are bidden to prepare for the annual invasion, when nothing is sacred from their inquisitive and poisonous tentacles. Still amongst the machinery, we observe "forest devils" and stump-pullers. These, again, are peculiarly Australian, called into existence by the exigencies of agricultural life. The country abounds with the stumps of trees. The giants have been levelled to the ground, but the stumps remain, firmly rooted in the soil. Now certain portable "forest devils" have been invented by means of which one man can, with the aid of a lever and a wheel-gear, draw from the ground the most stubborn stump of a tree. Agricultural dentistry—that is what it is! Again, there are several varieties of steel windmills

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and other machinery for raising and distributing water. Irrigation is one of the problems of this growing country, and engineering science is doing its best to solve that problem. They have even the milking machine, that last contrivance to compel steel and rubber to do what hitherto the human hand alone has been able to accomplish. Farther on are carriages and buggies, eminently suited for this land. But one needs to know them. To a new-comer they present the appearance of supreme uncomfortableness. Persons who try them speak in different terms of them. Certain types of English carriages do not appear to have found their way here. But while machinery has a peculiar fascination, it is wholly eclipsed by the live stock and produce of the country. I am no judge of cattle, but the professional judges who awarded prizes had much to say about the quality of the horses and oxen and sheep and swine. And everybody seemed pleased, so I cheerfully add my "Amen," without reason, save that unreasonable reason that "everybody says so." And "everybody" in this connection must be right. But I do know wool when I see it. Australia is proud of its wool, and it has reason to be. Many of the prize sheep seemed to have more wool than flesh upon them. Again and again I buried my hand, and wrist, and even beyond that, in the wool of the sheep. It hung upon them in layers; a burden to the poor animals, a little gold mine to the wool-growers. Of poultry, also, I am no judge, being severely limited in experience to a few hens who do not lay nearly so many

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eggs per day as they should, considering what is spent upon them. But in the show they had hens which had laid an average of 240-250 eggs in the season, and they looked quite cheerful after the effort. One farmer printed a notice to the effect that his profits on eggs alone during the year had been £441. Intimations of that kind provoke serious thought in many directions. But the produce! It was a perfect revelation of the wealth of the country. The average Englishman, coming out here for the first time, would not believe that any State could produce the variety that these States produce. The point to be observed is that this wonderful productiveness is the fertility of a country not long cleared. And the further point to be noted is that there is very much more to follow as the country develops. Perhaps the most interesting thing in the show was the various collections of exhibits from societies or groups, representing the produce of a certain district. The *whole* of the produce of the district was shown in sample. Think of one limited area producing wheat—yielding thirty-six bushels for every bushel and a quarter of seed—oats, barley, maize, peas, rye grass, linseed, hemp, mangolds, beetroot (nearly half a yard long), sugar beet, carrots, onions, turnips, cabbage, potatoes (many weighing more than a pound), apples, lemons, nuts, olive oil, meal, poultry, eggs, wool, wine, bacon, butter and honey. That is the product of one district only. The place seems capable of producing everything. Honey is the thing that imposes itself upon one. It is a great country for honey. In

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the bush it flows wild and men gather it in bucketfuls. And where it is cultivated it is cheap enough, being about one-third the price of English honey. Of course, all this means that industries are springing up everywhere. Australia has its own condensed milk factories; it dries its own raisins, makes its own chutney, and sauces, and jams, and tins fruit for home use and export.

I said there is more to follow. The science of agriculture is being developed. There are State Schools' competitions, which include samples of forestry, fruit trees, grains, forage and roots, grasses and clovers, potatoes, fibres, vegetables, honey, etc. But the competitors must describe as well as exhibit. They must be able to answer questions on soils and produce, and they must be able to make models. The whole trend of agricultural education is scientific.

The folk at home do not know all this. They ought to know. Now that a Land Act is in operation, and the big estates are being cut up, we may expect a great boom in agriculture. People will then be wanted from the Old Country. There is plenty of room, and a population is imperatively needed. But let none go over until the gong sounds.

CHAPTER XXII

AN INTERLUDE—A DUST STORM IN SUMMER

THE day had been intolerably hot. A copper haze hung over the landscape, weighing upon it with the solemnity of a funeral pall. All life was weary. The leaves of the blue gum tree drooped in a manner unusual for them. The flowers hung their heads upon their stalks as if the oppression of the atmosphere was insupportable, and the day for the shattering of the fragile floral vase had arrived. Men returned home from their labour, and after the evening meal refused to stir out either to concert, lecture, theatre, or entertainment of any kind. It was a north wind day of a peculiarly unpleasant type, followed by a still more unpleasant evening. Then came a lull. A deathly silence reigned over the city and suburbs. A curious veil of murky cloud overspread the face of the sky. In the bedroom the thermometer registered over 90 degrees. We glanced at the glass and thanked God that our beds were outside in the open air. But even there the heat was oppressive. The little lad, always so careful to cover up his body, had flung off all the coverings from his bed, and lay exposed to the air of the night. It was a night when to woo the goddess of sleep was next to impossible. The hours

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passed by—eleven, twelve, one. Still no sleep. Still that terrible oppression. Still that suffocating heat.

And then, in a moment of time, without the least warning or premonitory sign, there came a change such as Englishmen never experience in their own country. It was a sudden roar, a descending blast, a tempest unchained. The storm literally burst upon us. It was an explosion, instantaneous and complete. The great trees around us were suddenly seized by the mysterious and invisible power of the storm, and bent and rocked and shaken and twisted in a manner terrifying to behold. The wind travelled, so we learned the next day, at the mad speed of sixty-five miles an hour.

The entire neighbourhood appeared to be seized in the grip of a storm fiend which wreaked its vengeance upon everything that lay in its path. Balconies upon which men slept were shaken as if some malign power determined to wreck them. Out into that storm I stepped, clad only in pyjamas. The terror of it fascinated me, held me spellbound, compelled me to share it. It was a *tourmente* of the Alps repeated in the streets of a Southern city, but with clouds of dust in place of clouds of snow. The cold air from the South encountering the hot air of the languishing city created an aerial funnel which sucked up the *débris* of the streets into its enormous mouth. That dust! Can I ever forget it? It blotted out from my vision the brilliant light of the electric lamps. It obscured the houses across the wide streets. It black-

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ened the country beyond, and made the dark night a scene of terror. Steadily the temperature dropped until within half an hour the glass registered twenty-five degrees less than it did at midnight. Then the heavens began to blaze and the thunder to roar. From a dozen points at once the lightning broke forth. Crash after crash of thunder shook the house. And still the choking dust mounted high into the air. Would the rain never descend and give us once more a clear atmosphere? One short, sharp, tropical storm of rain, one welcome deluge, and this dust fiend would be laid for the time. The inky clouds could not promise so much benediction and after all mock us!

The lightning ceased as suddenly as it commenced. The last peal of thunder sounded, and still no drop of rain fell. Meanwhile the storm of wind and dust recommenced, this time with increased fury. It drove all outdoor sleepers within doors. Beds were hastily dragged from balconies into bedrooms. Lights were seen in nearly every room within the line of vision. The cries of startled children mingled with the furious screaming of the wind. It was a night of horror and of fear. For three hours the tempest raged, and then, in a moment of time, it ceased with dramatic suddenness. The dust gradually fell again to the ground from which it had been drawn. The face of the sky cleared, and the stars shone out. The atmosphere became chilly, and discarded blankets were once more drawn over shivering persons, half asleep and half awake. The *tourmente* had spent itself.

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From out of a brazen sky the sun shone down next morning upon a scene of wreckage. Trees were uprooted, fences torn down, shrubs destroyed, flowers broken from their stalks and left dead upon the ground. Gardens looked as if some demon had wrought his evil will upon them during the night. Poor broken lilies, prostrate roses, crushed herbs, wounded by that cruel storm ! The house within was enveloped in a mantle of fine dust. Nothing had escaped. It was but yesterday that the entire establishment was clean and attractive ; this morning it is a scene of desolation, a place over which a woman can only shed tears. The rain had not descended : we must set to work and clean up the house and hope for the merciful showers from heaven to come and wash the face of that Nature which the storm has so begrimed.

A storm so bad as this may not occur again for weeks or months. Once in a lifetime is sufficient. It represents the unpleasant side of Nature in a sub-tropical country. Seasoned Colonials, while they dislike these terrible outbursts of Nature in the South, console themselves that these dust storms are **nothing** in comparison with the dust storms of the north. "You should go to Broken Hill to know what dust can do," said one of them ; "a dust storm there is terrible." But that of this awful night is quite bad enough for me.

CHAPTER XXIII

CHRISTMAS IN AUSTRALIA

WHILE it may be far from exact to say, with certain modern philosophers, that climate creates and explains religions, it is undoubtedly true that climate exercises a modifying effect upon certain of the traditional observances of religion. Christmas is a case in point. A man brought up in a northern clime associates the great festival with the shortest day, and often with the sharpest weather. Keen frost, deep snow, biting winds, roaring fires, bare gardens—these are the framework of his Christmas. His thought transfers these wintry conditions to the Holy Land, and he pictures the great Birth as having occurred amidst the rigours of a northern winter. In this he is probably wrong, but it is an error taught him by his native soil, and from which often he has not sufficient knowledge or imagination to free himself. Christmas and cold are to him synonymous.

When such a man crosses the seas and lives for a time in a tropical or a sub-tropical climate, he finds it exceedingly difficult to adjust himself to the new Christmas conditions. He finds his new Christmas so utterly different from anything he

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has hitherto experienced, that the observance of the festival smacks of unreality. It is now midsummer with him; the days of the year are at their longest; the fireplaces are filled with shavings, or discreetly hidden from view by painted screens. The winds that blow come with fiery breath, the gardens are blooming with summer flowers, and the orchards are filled with fruit trees bearing their ripened produce. It requires a particularly powerful imagination to surmount this actual Christmas and to replace it by the traditional Christmas of the Old Land. And this kind of imagination I do not possess.

It was an announcement in a large shop in Collins Street that first made me aware of the proximity of Christmas: "Christmas Presents for the Folks at Home—the last English mail in time for Christmas leaves Melbourne on Nov. 19." Thus ran the notice. And it struck me in a most curious manner. The calendar distinctly pointed to Christmas, but the weather and the gardens and the general surroundings whispered mockingly: "This is nearing midsummer; the longest day is coming. Christmas is a fiction—poor Englishman, there is no Christmas for you; get out your duck suits and straw hat, and prepare for picnics and a summer holiday." And then I knew that I must walk by faith and not by sight. For the first time in my life Christmas became empty of meaning. All the sentiment of it vanished in a moment. I was alone, an actor in the midst of a stage devoid of scenery. Every single "property" of the great Christmas festival slowly accumulated

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during more than forty years of life had been carried away in an instant. Blazing logs, crackling fires, merry parties, mysterious stockings, frosty window panes, keen air, snow-covered ground, and, above all, the waits—all had gone, carried off by the magician who lives on this side of the Equator.

And immediately Collins Street, for the moment, became a place of exile. Its light turned to darkness, its charm fled. I turned to the dear little woman at my side, and I saw that her face was wet with tears.

We had to encounter a new kind of Christmas, and when the first shock was over we settled to the idea, and determined to have a good time. "But why not have the old and the new?" we said. If space had placed 13,000 miles between us and the Christmas we love so well, space could not imprison our thoughts. So we determined to fly to the Old Country and have an old-fashioned English Christmas. In a moment of time we were in Gamage's, showing the children the wonderful toys. Then we shopped in Regent Street, and afterwards went to Maskelyne and Devant's, and later took the train into the country. We watched the snow fall, and afterwards did some snowballing. We went to church, and sang hymns and carols. And then came dinner and the family party. We had a real good time, until the maid came and said: "There's a north wind, madam. I am going to close the windows." And in a moment we were back to our own Christmas, with the thermometer registering a little over ninety degrees.

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That north wind needs a word of explanation. It is the sirocco of Victoria. Its hot breath is heralded by a day or a night of depression. And when it arrives it is pitiless. Great clouds of dust come with it, making life unbearable. Like a funeral pall the dust hangs over everything. The skin becomes hot and dry, and everybody is out of temper. It is useless to fight the north wind. The only thing to be done is to run away from it by closing up the house and hermetically sealing every window until the calamity is overpast. When the change comes and the wind veers to the south, the relief is unspeakably precious. The temperature will drop sometimes no fewer than thirty-five degrees in half an hour. And then it is that influenza is likely to be contracted. I said the thermometer registered ninety degrees; that was when the north wind commenced to blow. But at midday the mercury had mounted up to one hundred degrees in *the shade*. It was terrible. The wind was as the breath of a fiery oven. The trees drooped, the flowers hung lifeless upon their stalks, the grass of the lawn turned brown in an hour, and the parched earth gaped and gasped. Over the entire soil there quivered the fateful shimmer of the heat. Men and birds and beasts were smitten with an overwhelming languor. It was the African desert over again without relief. Little wonder, then, on the next day, the journals reported fires in every direction. One single spark sufficed to set an entire countryside on fire. Enormous crops of wheat, ripe and ready to be reaped,

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were consumed by the flames in a single morning. Useless to fight that raging furnace! Once the first fiery tongue leapt from one stalk to another the whole area was doomed. In one part of Victoria the bush and wheat-field fires devastated fifty miles of country.

Thus our Christmas week opened. After that all Christmas ceremony was obviously mere stage acting. Yet the form was rigorously observed. Cards were exchanged and presents given. But *such* presents! Take the following alluring notices, for example, and let anyone imagine how they struck an Englishman for the first time:

"New sunshades and parasols—splendid presents for Christmas." "New summer hats—just the thing for a Christmas present." "Indian muslins, just arrived—nothing better for a Christmas present." It was all lost upon me. For parasols I insisted upon reading "umbrellas"; for summer hats, "furs and snow-boots"; for Indian muslins, "warm West of England tweeds"—habits like mine cannot be broken in a moment. Of course, there are toy fairs arranged for the youngsters, and there is even a pretence of having Father Christmas in traditional garb. But what can the white-bearded, frosted patriarch mean to children who have never seen snow and whose patriarchs are sunburnt with long exposure to the atmosphere in the hot Bush?

Most of all I miss the poultry display. Those long lines of turkeys and geese killed a week in advance of Christmas, and exhibited in enticing

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fashion until Christmas Eve!—we have none of that here. Imagine a turkey being hung day after day for a week in an atmosphere like this! There is one display, and that is on Christmas Eve, and even that one is modest compared with what we have been accustomed to in the Old Country. The birds are not killed until the last minute, hence they are not so tender as English turkeys. It is mere slavery, this traditional eating of turkey and plum-pudding at Christmas time; but the older folk here permit themselves to be willing victims of custom. It is turkey and plum-pudding at home; then it shall be that here, so they argue. Climate and season protest against it, but in vain. One family of which I heard drew down their blinds one Christmas, and lit the gas, and ate their Christmas dinner under artificial light. It was the nearest approach they could make to the Old Country way.

The younger generation is making the daring experiment of trying to abandon the English Christmas, and to replace it by an Australian festival. They argue that the transplanting of Northern customs to these hot climes is ridiculous, and that whereas rich and heavy meals may be in place at Christmastide in a climate where snow and frost are found, they are utterly out of place here under azure-burning skies. Some plants will not bear transplanting, and this is one of them. The Yule-log and furs have never established themselves here at midsummer, neither should the turkey and plum-pudding be permitted to do so. Hence the young Australian is quietly drop-

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ping the traditional Christmas fare, and substituting for it ices, cool drinks, and fruit. And as peaches and apricots are now selling at one penny per pound, he finds it advantageous, in more ways than one, to accept the natural boon of the country rather than the artificial one of tradition.

A new Christmas is being born in which the old spirit is finding fresh forms more consonant with the climate. God forbid that the old spirit should ever die !

The great heat which ushered in our last Christmas week in Australia was exceptionally trying during the hours of public worship. For many, church-going was out of the question. People remained at home, seeking coolness in darkened houses. Those who ventured out to church on the Sunday morning had to travel in stifling railway carriages, or walk over baking pavements. Within the church electric fans were moving, together with a multitude of hand fans. At first it is distracting to a preacher to speak to hundreds of people who are fanning themselves; after a time, however, neither preacher nor audience takes any notice of the motion. The feminine portion of the congregation is clad wholly in white; the men affect light cashmeres, tweeds, or tussore silk. Scarcely a black hat is seen. "Topees," tropical helmets, and straws are the order of the day. At night the church was full for a special Christmas service. But everybody was languid. The hymns were sung without the usual enthusiasm. The great heat had, for the time being, ruined the organ, which

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remained silent. The poor preacher used up a handkerchief or two in the effort to keep his face dry. Then it was that the incongruity of keeping the traditional Christmas under the Southern Cross was manifest in its fullest form. For the choir stood and sang the carol, beginning :

“See amid the winter snow,”

and the thermometer registered over ninety degrees !
They sang again Rossetti’s beautiful song,

“In the bleak mid-winter,”

and the great organ solemnly protested that it had been ruined temporarily by midsummer heat.

No ! it is useless to try and link up a Northern Christmas with our Australian climate. The effort miserably fails.

Christmas Day, however, compensated us for all the trying heat of the previous week. There came one of those dramatic changes in temperature for which Melbourne is noted. In one hour the glass fell nearly thirty degrees. A “southerly buster” broke over us without warning, and when the dust storm had passed people were glad to put on thicker clothing. And so it came to pass that Christmas Day was chilly. The tempest broke up the heat and gave us weather less than normal. With the cooler temperature, goose and plum-pudding seemed more in place than in former years. But how could there be an English Christmas Day when the light remained until half-past eight ? Before the kindly darkness came

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on, the little people, who "at home" would have been busy with the Christmas-tree, were yawning and inquiring after bed.

One can never forget these Christmas days under the Southern Cross, but to experience the ancient sentiment of Christmas one must be in the ancient home.

CHAPTER XXIV

SOCIAL LIFE IN AUSTRALIA

It is intensely interesting in a new country like Australia to watch the evolution of the aristocracy. The process is very rapid. That old idea about ten generations being necessary to make a gentleman has no countenance in that part of the world. Ten years or less now suffice. It is all a question of money-bags, and money is made with great ease and rapidity in Australia—at least by some. A heavy gamble in land will change a man of moderate fortune into a wealthy person. Indeed, when one comes to look into the matter, quite a large number of the people in Australia who are to-day extremely rich owe their wealth not to trading of any kind but to a gamble with land. They came out in the early days, and obtained land for nothing at all, or next to nothing. The Government of that time had no foresight, nor backsight either. Criminally forgetful of the iniquitous land laws of the old world, they did not scruple to transfer these to the new soil, and so lay the foundation of serious trouble in the days to come. Men who paid a ten-pound note for a piece of land were enabled to sell it some years later for a fabulous sum, with the consequence that to

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the end of time the public must pay increased prices for the wares it purchases. In Collins Street, for example, land which was once ten pounds an acre is now sold at twelve hundred sovereigns per foot, and at the chemist's shop in that street we must pay half-a-crown for a bottle of mixture which in England would be sold for ninepence !

But, of course, the public does not count ; it merely looks on, suffers, and—pays, while the land gambler is clothed with purple and fine linen, and fares sumptuously every day. And that brings me back to this gentleman, now in the guise of an aristocrat, but often bearing marks of the clay out of which he has fashioned himself. The evolution of the aristocrat out here, I was saying, is rapid. A few years, and his children obliterate all traces of their father's former life. The old deal is stained and varnished, and appears as excellent mahogany. As I gaze upon this throng of well-dressed people, and remember their beginnings, I perceive a mirror of the world, "Queen Anne in front and Mary Ann behind." It is not their success that offends so much as their veneer and pretence. These people conveniently forget their humble origin. They assume important airs which ill fit them. They gather themselves together into a close corporation from which the unmoneyed are excluded. When they marry their weddings are described as "fashionable" weddings. A nod from Government House is their beatitude. An English title is worshipped by them. It is all very comic to an Englishman, this bid for place and fame. Aristoc-

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cratic pretence in England is bad enough, where family pedigrees count for something; it is vulgar here, where many of the pretenders have no pedigree at all. Australia has the chance to maintain a pure and wholesome democracy of the highest type; it will be a pity if she forfeits it.

Over against this crowd of would-be aristocrats there must be placed a smaller and nobler company of people who, ascending from humble life, have nevertheless preserved their simplicity, their modesty, and—their Christianity. They are amongst the very best men of Australia, admired by all who can appraise worth.

The great social season begins at the end of October. Everybody who is anybody must now go to milliner, dressmaker, tailor, and bootmaker, and henceforward, until the end of the season, appear in public places with the great. Dinners, luncheons, "five o'clocks," balls, and all kinds of reunions serve to assemble our new aristocracy. Government House, of course, sets the pace and the fashion. It is the ambition of all who aspire to a place among the chosen to be received at Government House.

The Melbourne spring season begins with Henley-on-Yarra. It is an imitation of Henley-on-Thames, and it fairly rivals the older institution. The dresses are quite as smart, the social life quite as gay, and the boats quite as attractive as those "at home." What is lacking is the Thames, with its locks and banks and exquisite green surroundings. The Yarra can never rival, in these respects, the English river. But

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it has a charm of its own. Scores of thousands of people attend it. It is a people's holiday, and anyone can procure a boat and join the procession. It is a pretty spectacle—the best and the most innocent of all Australian open-air functions.

Henley is followed by a carnival of racing which centres in the famous "Cup." There is money enough in Melbourne for prize-fights, boxing-matches, and sports of all kinds. It is not much to the credit of this class of people that they cheerfully pay big prices for their lower pleasures, while the Hospital Saturday and Sunday Fund suffered last year to the extent of a thousand pounds. We have long since discovered that these pleasure-lovers have not only little love for the Church—they give very little to ordinary charity. Were the much-abused Churches to withdraw from Hospital Sunday, some of the philanthropic institutions would be compelled to close down.

The craze of the ordinary Victorian is horse-racing. He is simply mad on it. "Meetings" are frequent throughout the year. Hundreds of men live for nothing else. We have a number of parasites who live on the community, contributing nothing to its wealth or progress, and who are interested alone in betting and gambling. Gambling is one great vice of the Australian people. It has infected every class of the community. An attack upon gambling evokes no kind of enthusiasm; too many people are involved in the matter. Even some Church members will ask, with naïve innocence, "Where is the harm in

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gambling if you can afford it?" Taking the community as a whole, it would be an exception to find an ordinary man who did not dabble a little in gambling. The people see no harm in it. This is why the "Cup" holds such a place in the public mind. For weeks before the race all conversation turns towards Cup Day. Milliners, dressmakers, opticians, and tradesmen of every class lay themselves out to cater for "Cup" customers. The newspapers are full of it. More space is devoted in the Melbourne papers to a description of the great race than is ever given in the London journals to a description of the Derby at Epsom. If a visitor from the planet Mars came to the city he would not receive more attention than the "Cup" receives. It is a species of madness, an obsession. One-sixth of the population of the city witnesses the actual running of the race. The Governor-General is there, together with the governors of other States, who journey to Melbourne expressly for the occasion. And all to witness a race that endures exactly three minutes!

It is urged that a function of this kind is a social magnet which brings together people from all over the country; that, in fact, it is a grand opportunity for the reunion of friends. We all admit that. And there is no reason why the Melbourne Cup should not have a social significance pure and simple. If it had, it might be a healthy thing for the community. But, handicapped as it is with the gambling element, it becomes, for a number of people, a social nuisance. It is the entanglement of all our sports with the prac-

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tice of betting that has ruined what might easily have become an excellent means of social cement. And it goes without saying that the wrong horse won last year. Thousands of persons had staked their all on Beragoon. The usual excuses were given for the defeat of the favourite, but the unexpected happened and Posinatus won. "It is the fortune of war and of horse-racing," was the comment; but it is not at all likely that the fools who lost their money will learn anything as the result thereof.

If Australia had but the courage to clear itself of the gambling parasite which is sapping its best life! For so young a country to have embarked upon this dangerous path is not good. Strong nations are not built up of men to whom pleasure is the very first consideration, especially when that pleasure is tainted with betting. A sudden reverse of national fortune would sober this people and start it upon a more noble path. Pity if it does not learn without that stern necessity. What the country needs is a religious revival of a deep and genuine kind. The men of fine minds and loftier ideals, who are better patriots than the gamblers, and who desire to see healthy and pure sport encouraged and unhealthy sport discouraged, are rewarded by being dubbed "wowsers." Undoubtedly some are too puritanical in their protest, but with many Australians there is no *modus vivendi*—it is all or nothing.

The zest for sport is, I imagine, even a little keener than in England. It is no uncommon thing to see at the best football matches, where, for ex-

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ample, the university team is playing, a considerable number of medical and other professional men. The better educated classes patronise open-air sport to a greater degree than do the corresponding classes in England. And Australian football is a little more scientific than either Rugby or Association. It is a game entirely alone. The man who seizes the ball with his hands may not run with it unless he bounces it every few yards as he runs. This is a distinct improvement upon the old game. But even here there is far too much rough play, and even brutality, in the playing of the game.

It need scarcely be said that life out here is largely an open-air life. The numerous suburbs are filled with people who come to and from the city on business. From the nearer to the remoter suburbs there is abundant space in which men and women can breathe without fear of stifling. Large, airy streets, a clear atmosphere, gardens and parks galore—everything makes for an open-air life. And the hours of business are so arranged that the invitation to the open is not a hollow mockery. From Monday to Thursday all shops close at six o'clock. On Friday they remain open until ten o'clock. On Saturdays every shop is closed at one o'clock midday. Thus business becomes service, and is never allowed to degenerate into slavery. Might not the Mother Country learn a lesson from her Southern daughter? If Melbourne can transact its business, in large and small shops alike, within reasonable hours, why cannot London do likewise? Thousands of small

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tradesmen in the Old Country are condemned to late hours without any reason save that of stupidity and selfishness on somebody's part. In Australia they do not leave it to the parochial "conscience" to decide whether the shops in a given locality shall close early or not. They know human nature too well to yield to that folly. No! The hours of closing are fixed by Parliament, and the law leaves no loophole for selfish tradesmen to advantage themselves at the expense of their neighbours. You close at the appointed hour, or are subject to a heavy fine. This ampler liberty is the radical reason for the Australian's freer, open-air life and love of sport.

Both Adelaide and Melbourne possess beautiful public gardens. Here, even in midwinter, there is a rosery in the centre of the gardens, with roses of every hue still flourishing. And in these beds a mass of splendid colour. And it is midwinter! The difficulty for a new arrival is to get accustomed to this topsy-turvydom. The good folk here are talking about the "shortest day" arriving on June 21. Day does not break until a little after seven o'clock, and it is dark before six at night. On Saturday afternoons in June football is being played, and in October cricket commences. And when Christmas arrives we shall be sweltering in the heat of midsummer. South here is the equal of north at home, and an Australian east means an English west. It is all Alice in Wonderland, a life of topsy-turvy, and it is not at all easy at first to adjust oneself to the new conditions.

CHAPTER XXV

LABOUR CONDITIONS IN AUSTRALIA

THE increasing number of immigrants arriving on Australian shores is an eloquent witness to the fact that Australia is slowly winning a reputation "at home" as the "working man's paradise." There are always a few malcontents in every community, and amongst the immigrants there is no exception to this rule. Some come out expecting to find slabs of gold awaiting them in the streets, and they are disappointed when they discover that they will be required to work hard, especially if they go upon the land. But the majority show every sign of contentment. From a large number of new-comers I have heard practically the one comment: "We would not return to the old conditions; we are more than happy under the Southern Cross." To cite a few cases. A boot operative, who at Kettering had earned on an average only 18s. 6d. per week for the last twelve months, came out a short time ago. Within two hours of landing he obtained a billet at a pound a week, plus board and lodging. He has practically the pound clear. This is his start. He will soon double or treble that amount. He is not yet in his own business. Indeed, for the sake of his elder child

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he desires to go on to the land, and his present situation is a kind of apprenticeship to his future career.

Domestic servants, who at home earned only £14 or £16 a year, start here with £30 or £35 per annum. The domestic problem is acute in Australia. Hundreds of people are unable to obtain maids at any price. Good domestic servants are always in great demand. Girls in service have a large amount of liberty. "Slaveys" are unknown. Other cases known to me are those of a commercial traveller who had the offer of three situations within an hour of landing in Adelaide; three carpenters who obtained places immediately at a wage double that they had received in England; two engineers who obtained employment in the Newport works within a day of landing, and many others. Now, nearly all the men I encountered from the Old Land told me that the utmost ignorance prevails at home about labour questions in Australia. They said: "Why do you not enlighten people a little more concerning the conditions of labour in Australia?" To this they frequently add the remark that, while Canada seems an easy distance from England, Australia seems so far away as to frighten people from attempting to emigrate. This, of course, is easily understood. Eight or ten days from Liverpool takes one to Canada. It is five times eight days from Liverpool to Australia. If a man goes to Canada, and discovers that he has made a mistake, he can easily return home; but it seems very different when the

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case is Australia. He has got to the uttermost ends of the earth, and the frightful expanse of water, covering 13,000 miles, lies between him and "home."

Now, I venture to think that this is a mere bogey. The distance looks worse on paper than it is in reality. When once the trip has been made the mystery of distance is solved, and the traveller can intelligently think himself back over the seas, and in doing this the terror ceases to exist. It is the unknown that troubles one. But if a man is certain before he starts out that he is doing right in coming, that is, if he takes reasonable precautions to inform himself concerning his chances of employment here, he has nothing to fear. He will not desire to return. Australia will become his home. The Old Land will not disappear from his horizon; it will rather lie before him from afar, spread out in true perspective. He will better see the Old Land from here than he saw it at home. How, then, shall he take these reasonable precautions? I advise any prospective immigrant to see the Agents-General in London. Each State has its Agent, and from him all particulars can be obtained.

To be quite frank, there is no place in Australia for ne'er-do-wells, for loungers, for lotus-eaters, for men who have no kindly feeling towards honest work. But for real workers, in nearly all branches, there is abundance of room. As against Canada, Australia has the advantage of being sunlit all the year round. There are no rigorous winters. In the north there are no winters at all. Men having sons do exceed-

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ingly well in Australia. There is a great shortage of boys.

To begin with wages. In practically all departments wages are higher—much higher—than at home. The high wages represent an evolution. They are the result of the working of Trade Unionism. The unions first fought the battle, and now legislation has fixed the terms of employment. One great institution in Australia is the "Wages Boards." A word is necessary concerning these. It is not every trade that has its wages board, but as things look at present it will not be long before wages boards are universal. This system of fixing wages dates from the year 1896, when one or two trades fell under the rule. In 1900 it was extended to other trades, and in 1907 to yet others, including shop employees, carters, and drivers. Both wages and hours are fixed, the minimum being, in many cases, much higher than the maximum in England. In 1897 the system was applied to outside women workers in the clothing trade, with this result, that whereas in that year the average wage of women workers was 12s. 3d. per week, in 1908 it rose to £1 2s. 4d. per week. The wages boards are formed upon the application of masters and men. A chairman is selected—generally an outsider and an impartial man—and regular business is transacted. A minimum wage is fixed, not always to the employer's liking.

The system has many advantages, and some disadvantages. It does not always work fairly, and it does not always discriminate between the genuine

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worker who is worthy of his salary and the idler who shirks his work. But, taken as a whole, the system has been a boon, and has done much to reduce sweating. In the present troubled condition of labour in England it might be advantageous for leaders to examine the Australian system, and to adopt its best points. Not only are wages fixed; the hours of labour are rigidly fixed also. The eight hours day for the majority of trades has been in operation since 1855, when the agitation took practical shape. In factories the working week is one of forty-eight hours, distributed in such a manner as to allow of work ceasing on five nights of the week at five o'clock, and on Saturday at noon. Shop hours are similarly fixed. As previously mentioned, shops close at six o'clock at night and one o'clock on Saturdays. Exceptions are made in the case of fruit and bread shops, as well as tobacconists, hairdressers, restaurants, and the like. The chemists are compelled to close at 8 P.M. There is a ridiculous side to this at times. One evening I entered a newsagent's shop to purchase a top for my boy. The proprietor sold toys as well as books and papers. The hour was a little after six. I purchased my evening paper without difficulty, but the top was refused, although it stared me in the face from a shelf in the rear. It was useless to plead. "It is after six," the proprietor said, "and I dare not sell you the top." You will see at once that there is secured abundant leisure for the vast majority of the population.

A recent increase concerns clerks. It had been

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urged upon the board by the Western Australian and the Victorian branches of the Federated Clerks' Union that a minimum wage of £4 a week should be paid, the working week to consist of 38 hours. This log, however, has been turned down. The decisions arrived at were as follows: Wool clerks to work for 37 hours a week from March to September, and 48 hours from September to March; clerks in shops, factories, mills, etc., 48 hours a week; all other clerks 42½ hours. The scale of pay was fixed as follows:

Clerks 21 years of age and over, 48s. a week.

Under 16 years of age, 10s.

Commencing work at 16 years, 12s. 6d. for the first six months, and 15s. for the second six months.

Commencing at 17 years, 15s.; with one year's experience, 17s. 6d.; with two years' experience, 20s.

Commencing at 18 years of age, 17s. 6d.; with one year's experience, 20s.; with two years' experience, 22s. 6d.; with three years' experience, 25s.

Commencing at 19 years of age, 20s.; with one year's experience, 22s. 6d.; with two years' experience, 25s.; with three years' experience, 27s. 6d.; with four years' experience, 30s.

Commencing at 20 years of age, 25s.; with one year's experience, 27s. 6d.; with two years' experience, 30s.; with three years' experience, 32s. 6d.; with four years' experience, 35s.; with five years' experience, 40s.; and thereafter the minimum wage.

The principle has also been established of *equal pay for both sexes*. Now, this sounds magnificent on paper. But the question is, Will it finally work?

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This rate, however, may be compared with the rate of pay for labourers, who get as much as 9s. per day as Government servants.

Another interesting thing concerns seamen. The eight hours' day is in operation throughout the Commonwealth in nearly all departments of labour. But until recently seamen have not come within its provisions. For some time there had been an agitation amongst them, and as a result of conferences between the masters and the men, the matter was submitted to the decision of the Arbitration Court, with the result that seamen on the Australian coast were placed on an equality with the workers on land. The judge, in giving his decision, referred to the "meagre pittance" received at present by able-bodied seamen. The award has restricted the hours of labour in port for seamen to eight hours, and in daylight, excepting on days of departure. At sea, stokehold men and deck hands are also placed upon the eight hours' footing. The week consists of six working days. If a ship remains in port on Sundays or holidays, the seamen are to be free from labour. When a ship departs from a main port on a Sunday or holiday each seaman is entitled to an extra day's pay. If Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day, Good Friday, or Easter Monday be spent at sea, the seaman is to be compensated by receiving either an extra day's pay for each holiday so spent at sea or an extra day off on shore. Overtime is to be paid for at the rate of 1s. 3d. or 1s. 6d. per hour. The new rates of pay are fixed as follows: Boatswain,

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£9 per month; lamp-trimmer, £9; A.B., £8; ordinary seaman under eighteen, £5; over eighteen, £6; donkeyman, £11; fireman, £10—all per month, plus food.

British seamen will rub their eyes at this list. Few in Australia regard it as other than just. The lot of the seaman was, not so many years ago, hard and inhuman. It has gradually been ameliorated. In the Old Land there is still abundant room for improvement, both in the matter of hours and wages. Australia is certainly setting a fine fashion and a fair pace in these things.

But with all these privileges there is a good deal of discontent in the labour world. There are too many strikes, some of which seem to the ordinary beholder to be stupid. It is serious when a thousand men strike because one of their number has been dismissed for a violation of the rules of the establishment. And there is a good deal of friction between Union and non-Union men. The goal of many of the foremost Labour men is avowed State Socialism.

Christmas is a favourable opportunity for observing the working of the Labour Laws in the colony. In the Old Land, the fortnight before Christmas Day is a period of rush and pressure and working overtime. On Christmas Eve, in particular, the shops are open until midnight, and even beyond. In Australia matters are very different. Two years ago Christmas Day fell on a Sunday. In the previous week the shops closed as usual each even-

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ing at six o'clock, and on Christmas Eve, being a Saturday, *the shops were all closed at one o'clock midday*. Is it not enough to make the average English shopkeeper gasp with astonishment and envy? Festival or no festival, the Australian workman observes the law as to hours of work; and he does not exceed his measure. On Christmas Eve of that year the final postal delivery was, as usual on a Saturday, at noon. Boxing Day being a general holiday, it was a holiday also for the postmen. Thus no letters were delivered for three days. Australia is called the "Workers' Paradise," and the name is well merited.

CHAPTER XXVI

DEAD FLIES IN THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

IN the year 1913 Messrs. Fred. B. Smith and Raymond Robins, the leaders of the "Men and Religion Movement" in America, paid a visit to Australia. They were received with open arms, and everywhere they gathered immense audiences of men to listen to their remarkable message. Mr. Smith has, since his tour, given his impressions of the conditions in Australia with singularly clear penetration. He says :

"Here we found that from the law-making end about everything that could be dreamed of for the good of the people has been done. Raymond Robins was simply overwhelmed with the magnitude of their legislation upon these questions. They have an eight-hour day universal labour law. They have a minimum wage law. They have an old-age pension Act. They have stringent laws concerning the operation of dangerous machinery without adequate protection for the workmen. There is not another land on earth with so little poverty in it. From the material standpoint they have reached a very high standard."

This is true photography. Mr. Smith kept his

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eyes open during his stay in the Commonwealth. But he was not blind to the other side of the picture. He continues :

“The striking thing is that while these men have been engaged in passing the most arbitrary industrial laws they have permitted, in many cases, the loosest ones to exist upon the great moral questions. The public bars are loosely run. Gambling is permitted at race tracks and cricket matches. A people may pass laws until Doomsday, and they alone will not make people good, righteous, nor happy. There is no other such final evidence upon this point as that given in Australia.”

This is the problem the churches in Australia have to face. The growth of freedom has not meant the growth of morals. On every hand we perceive the perversion of this wonderful liberty. In this Garden of Eden the snake has already appeared.

Thus I have learned in five years that a perfect climate, a perfect social environment, and an almost perfect social and industrial legislation, together fail to produce morality. When the law was passed forbidding all work in shops, warehouses, and factories after midday on Saturday, it was thought that the Sunday morning services in the churches might gain as the result. At least, the ancient plea, “too tired because of hard work until late on Saturday night,” would be impossible. But the increased facilities for pleasure have led, in many instances, to the entire secularisation of the Sunday. Much wanted more, more demanded the most. And so, for very many,

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the Christian Sunday has gone, being replaced by a day of pleasure, sometimes pure, and often riotous. It is not that the people who spend the Sunday on the Bay, or in the gully, or at the seaside, or on the golf course, or at the picture show, have any intellectual hostility to religion—many of them never dream of cultivating their intellectual life in any direction whatever; they simply do not care.

This problem, newly worked out amidst ideal conditions of living, affords food for thought for those persons who imagine that a Garden of Eden alone can make a man what he ought to be. Australia is the place to annihilate illusions of that kind.

Mr. Smith has put his finger upon another of Australia's sore places thus :

"We are all agreed that in Australia, in a larger sense than in any other place we have ever worked, 'Labour' and the Church seemed estranged. To speak of one man as a 'Labour' man and another as a 'Liberal' is almost synonymous with saying that one is an anti-Church and the other a Church man."

The fact is, generally speaking, undoubted, but why it should be so is difficult to understand. The common statement made by Labour leaders is that the Church is wholly pledged to capitalism and to the classes. No statement is more completely false. As a matter of fact, one of the radical causes of many troubles and injustices in our social system (I should not be far astray if I said it was *the* radical cause) is the iniquitous gamble in land which Aus-

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tralia deliberately allowed, and even fostered, in its early days. The vicious system of the Old World was transferred to the new soil, with the result that the present generation is paying usurious interest for the social sins of the fathers. House rents are wickedly high. Many commodities cost four times their real value because shopkeepers are compelled to pay absurd rents for their premises.

Many of the Socialists in Australia fail to allow for this. Churchmen are not responsible for the iniquities of the system. The greatest sinners in the olden days were men who knew far better the interior of a saloon than the interior of a church. And it ought to be said that the leaders of social reform in Australia to-day are men connected with the Church.

It is difficult to write about these things without appearing to be unsympathetic. The present writer, therefore, may be allowed to say that all his sympathies are with men who are struggling for justice. Labour men in Australia are right in demanding certain readjustments which will give them a freer manhood and a fuller share of the good things of life; but many of them are wrong in their temper and in their methods. Further, many of them are unfair in certain of their demands.

Take a concrete instance. A year ago there was in progress a lesser strike, involving some sixty or eighty men in an establishment which employs over 1,500 men. And why the strike? Will it be believed that, put in plain terms, the men struck for *less money*? The proprietor, who is a just and generous

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man, offered these particular men a new system of piece-work, by means of which they could earn as much as 17s. per day. It was a definite offer of advancement, yet it was refused in favour of the old system, which fixed (I believe) 12s. per day as a stated wage and apart from piece-work. Rather than accept the new system the men went out upon strike. To an ordinary person this seems an act of pure folly, going dead against the men's interests. It is an instance of a caucus imposing a tyranny. The first and the chief need of Australia, from an industrial point of view, is the establishment of friendly relations between employers and employed. At present suspicion and acrimony reign, with disastrous results.

There is a great part for the Church to play in the promotion of a better feeling among the people, but before this can be done some of the Socialist leaders will have to attend to a little reading, and cease to blacken a religion the alphabet of which they do not understand.

In point of fact, the Labour men see but two classes: the working classes, whose interests lie in high wages, low rents, and cheap land; and the non-working classes, whose interests lie in low wages, high rents, and dear land. It is obvious that there is room both for information to be imparted to, reconciliation to be effected between, and justice accorded by these parties. The Council of Churches has instituted a "Labour Sunday," in which the radical principles underlying the relation of master and man are expounded according to Christ. There

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is far too much suspicion on the part of the workers against the Churches. Perhaps "suspicion" is too mild a term to employ in view of the following extracts taken from official Labour papers. *The Tocsin* said a year or two back: "Take it any road you will, religion is a curse and a snare and a delusion and a malicious sham." Another Labour paper, *The Worker*, remarked: "When the Labour movement has to turn to God for help, it will be God help it indeed. . . . Its (the party's) creed is purely materialistic, concerning no world but this world. Labour writes on its doorposts, 'Wanted.—A Saviour; no God need apply.'" Ministers of religion are described as "wolves in sheep's clothing, Pharisees, whited sepulchres, who call themselves teachers of Christianity, reptiles to be loathed, who, under the cloak of religious authority or clerical superiority, help to rivet more firmly the chains of injustice and wrong." Of the Churches it is said: "Taking them as a whole, they are the sanctuaries of the sweater, the oppressor, and the Customs defrauder." It would seem almost hopeless to reason with men of this type. They have no discrimination. They have nothing but opprobrium to pour upon the Churches and upon Christianity. Theirs is a bitter and a wild crusade. It may be that certain types of religion which have flourished, and still to an extent flourish, have irritated them, and that with reason, but this wholesale attack is pitiful. Some of the workers appreciate "Labour Sunday"; others regard it as an insult. Happily, not all the Labour men outside the Churches are of this

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inflammable and virulent type. The Church in Australia has all its work cut out to reconcile the Labour party with the Evangel.

A man who speaks plainly about these things is likely to become unpopular. Two years ago I got into trouble through telling a few cold truths about the conditions of Australian labour. The affair came about thus : Labour was very scarce in certain trades, notably the building trade. Builders and contractors could not obtain nearly sufficient men to enable them to fulfil their contracts in time. High wages were paid and offered, but the shortage continued. Some of the men took advantage of this fact to further their own interests. One gentleman in particular was pointed out to me as by no means a rare case. He was in receipt of over £4 per week. Pay-night was Friday, and this gentleman, having received his salary, went in for a "good time" on that same evening—so "good" that he was unable to appear at work on the Saturday. With several cases of this order before me, I remarked to a reporter that some Australian workmen needed to take a more honourable view of work. They needed to learn the meaning of Mr. Ruskin's prophetic word concerning work as a factor in making character. Many of the workmen simply work for their pay, and they work as badly as they can. They have no conscience in their labour. And then I cited the cases named above.

This is how the chief Labour paper in Australia refers to the matter :

"Work is merely a means to an end, and there

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is nothing in it except for what it brings. The reason Mr. Spurr does not work is because he gets the products of labour he requires without producing them himself. As a matter of fact, the employing class simply want the workers to toil like galley slaves in order that they may make huge profits—and do no work. Manhood! Who are the men who spend their lives in arduous toil because they have been told it is right to work hard? The workers! Who are the unfortunates who see their wives becoming shrivelled-up drudges, careworn and ugly in middle life—while the employer's wife blooms with health and good feeding? Who are the victims who watch their sons and daughters being drawn into the drudgery of the factory when they ought to be at school? Who are the patient slaves who toil on, trying to prevent their daughters from being flung on the streets after they themselves have been sucked dry in the mill of labour and flung on the scrap-heap? The workers!"

Now, if this had been written in England, or in some parts of England, where wages are short and hours are long, there would have been point in the remarks. But in Australia there is an eight-hour day, and the wages are high, being fixed by wages boards. It is not the question of sweating nor over-work that is here raised, but the question of remunerative labour. The sweating and the grinding employers have no greater enemy than the present writer. But when an employer pays (as in the case cited) a liberal wage, he has the right to expect conscientious work

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from his men. And it is not conscientious when a man, by taking a day off for drinking, hampers and harasses his employer, who admittedly pays him well. I repeat, a number of Australian workmen need to take a more dignified and honourable view of work. Conditions of labour there are better than in any other part of the world. It is a thousand pities that certain paid "leaders" are eternally seeking to foment a bad spirit between masters and men.

The moral side of labour seems to me to be insufficiently emphasised. One of the speakers at an annual demonstration hinted that a six hours' day was a desirable goal to aim at. The suggestion was received with great applause. And the reason given was that when the actual needs of a community have been supplied work should cease and play begin. One speaker announced as his ideal for the twenty-four hours, eight hours' work, eight hours' play, and eight hours' sleep. He left no place for work of another kind, i.e. the work of study, of information, and of culture. This omission is symptomatic; it represents a real omission in the life of many young Australians. Work, play, and sleep, in the sense intended by many out there, will not conduce to the building of a great nation. Not so have the great world-empires been built up. Not so has Britain risen to her supreme position. One cannot help feeling that work is not yet invested with the dignity and sacredness which belong to it. It is too frequently, amongst Australians, regarded as a yoke which must, willy-nilly, be borne for a certain

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number of hours per day, and which ought to be thrown off at the earliest possible moment. The glory of work has not yet dawned upon the minds of many of this new generation in this new country. Their fathers knew it, rejoiced in it, and succeeded by means of it. The sons take life far too easily and light-heartedly. It is their peril that they do so. Another thing is that the term "worker" is too frequently restricted to one class of the community. A "worker" is almost exclusively conceived to be a person who toils with his hands, and soils them in the effort. Workers with brain and pen are often spoken of contemptuously, as if they did not know the meaning of labour. A friend of mine, a leading doctor in the city, told me a story which is typical of the thought of many workers. He attended a football match last season played between two teams, one of which was the University team. As the University men emerged from the pavilion to take the field a voice was raised in the crowd, "*Here come the loafers,*" and the remark met with not a little laughter. And these "loafers" are the coming physicians, journalists, and teachers of the State! The gulf created by prejudice between toilers with the hand and toilers with the brain needs speedily bridging. And it may be added that for these "loafers" there is nothing so easy as an eight hours' day. This is a kind and sympathetic criticism, and it is not superfluous.

As an illustration, on the other side, of what can be done and is being done to make labour a worthy thing, so far as agriculture is concerned, it may be

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well to describe some developments to which Australia is committed. At Ballarat we saw, in full operation, the work of the Agricultural High School. It was a perfect revelation to us. Here, for the first time, a new type of agriculturist is being produced. The old type, both at home and here, is well known, strong, hard-working, dogged, and not too well educated. The new type is entirely different from the old. This high school has been established by the Director of Education for the purpose of giving a broad and liberal education to the young men and women in whose hands the cultivation of the soil rests. It is an experimental college, but its success is already so striking that similar institutions will certainly spring up all over the Commonwealth. It claims to be the best-equipped school for experts in Victoria. The pile of buildings, which cost £13,000, is very imposing, and beautifully situated on the outskirts of the city. It is surrounded by eighty acres of land, used for experiments, as well as for the practical purpose of supplying the institution with vegetables. The whole land is carefully mapped out into certain lengths, upon each of which a trial is made of the value of various phosphates and manures. Thus, before a student passes in the work of practical agriculture, he knows exactly what is the fertilising power of every manure in the market. He also knows the cost of production; hence he can tell immediately whether or not his land will pay at a certain price.

The staff of teachers includes seven Masters of Arts, a Doctor of Philosophy, two Bachelors of Arts,

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and others. The curriculum is most thorough. The one idea of the institution is to produce intelligent students who can unite science to labour. The course of training includes carpentry, book-keeping, commercial correspondence, history, botany, art, chemistry, mathematics, languages, and cooking. Think of the old-fashioned farmer and his wife with these accomplishments ! We watched the students at work, and a healthier or more intelligent body of maidens and youths it would be impossible to find. The girls, no matter what their station, take their turn in cookery. Each day the kitchen is served by these young ladies, who cook the food, serve the meals, and then wash up. There are no servants to do the dirtier work. Everything is done by the young ladies themselves. We had the honour of lunching with the director and some of his staff. The meal served to us was, he assured me, just the ordinary meal of the establishment. Not a single extra dish had been created in honour of the visitors. It was the daily sixpenny meal. We had for sixpence five courses, including tomato soup, beautifully cooked fish, meat, and vegetables, a tasty pudding, cheese, and coffee.

This combination of the literary with the practical is a splendid idea. No student leaves the institution with only theoretical knowledge.

It ought to be said that the land upon which the experiments are made is exceedingly poor, and this is its great advantage for purposes of education. No poorer land is likely to be bought by these students

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when they set up for themselves. They know, therefore, how to make the best of the worst. Science pitted against a poor soil has conquered. The introduction of artificial manures has produced the most surprising results. The buildings of the institution are modern in every respect, the ventilation and the lighting being perfect.

In the matter of agricultural education, as shown in the Ballarat High School, Victoria is ahead of the Old Country. Is it not possible to adopt the best features of this school and apply them to the conditions in the Old Land? The soil is the radical and the burning question at home. The congestion of England in her towns and cities can only be relieved as the rural life of the country is revived. The poorest soil can be made productive by the use of scientific methods. The Scottish delegation to Australia were greatly impressed by what they saw at Ballarat. May not the mother learn a little from her daughter? The redemption of the land in England and Ireland would solve many of the social difficulties at home.

CHAPTER XXVII

AUSTRALIAN POLITICS

I HAVE no intention of discussing Australian politics. All that I shall attempt is a little portraiture, without the slightest "touching up." In 1910 Labour was triumphant at the elections. Looking through the list of triumphant candidates, I observe there were two labourers, a bricklayer, five miners, an engine-driver, an engine-fitter, a plumber, two farmers, a hatter, a traveller, a tailor, a pattern-maker, a quarryman, an orchardist, a watchmaker, a physician, an agent, two barristers, and three journalists. Was there ever such a Parliament as that? Of "middle-class" men there are very few; of so-called gentlemen scarcely any.

In 1912 the Liberals were returned to power in Victoria. "Liberal" in Australia is the equivalent of quasi-Conservative in England. There is really no "Liberal" party in the English sense of the word. The members of this party in Australia are Protectionists. The "Conservatives" are Free Traders, and also upholders of the "classes." This is by way of explanation. An Englishman does not easily or rapidly disentangle the political threads in this new country. They are much more complex

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than at home. The old English "Radical" party is represented here by the Labour party, which exceeds in its demands the programme of the Birmingham and Bradlaugh schools of the 'eighties.

The chief interest of the 1912 elections lay in the fact that for the first time the principles of preferential voting were put into practice. And it must be admitted that the experiment, with one exception, proved a great success. It was an experiment which might with great advantage be tried in England. In Australia, as in England, three-cornered contests work much harm and most manifest injustice. The introduction of a third party in an election has had the effect of splitting votes, and of returning to Parliament one whom the majority of the people would not and did not vote for. Preferential voting removes this anomaly—this injustice. For the benefit of any who do not understand its working, I may be permitted to explain the method. Three candidates offer themselves for election. Of these only one may represent the constituency. The three, we will suppose, represent only two interests, but for reasons of vanity or gain, in place of a single issue between two opponents, one of the interests is divided between two persons, each of whom has his advocates. Under the old system, as I have said, this rivalry was often fatal to the interests of the majority of the electors. While two quarrelled over the dainty morsel, the third, and least desirable, made off with it. But under preferential voting the electors are compelled to vote, in the order of their

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preference, for all three candidates. Unless they do this the voting-paper is rendered null and void. If one of the candidates secures an absolute majority over the other two—that is, if against his name the figure 1 predominates in numbers more than equal to 2 and 3 together—No. 1 is at once declared elected. But if No. 1 on the list has only a relative majority—that is, if Nos. 2 and 3 together outnumber him—then the votes given to No. 3, the last on the list, are taken from him and divided, in the order of preference, between Nos. 1 and 2. It may happen that the position of No. 1 is thereby so strengthened that he gains an absolute majority, in which case he is declared elected. Or it may happen, as in one case it did, that in the order of preference the votes taken from No. 3 and added to No. 2 give to the last-named the absolute majority, in which case he is declared elected. All parties are agreed that the system has worked excellently in the last election. The actual will of the majority of the electors has triumphed. In this matter, as in the other matter of voting by post, the Old Country has something to learn from Australia.

In 1911 the Referendum was submitted to the Australian people. To the astonishment of the Labour Government Australia voted "No" in the most emphatic manner to the proposals contained in the Referenda. A year previously Labour swept the boards; then the reaction came. The Government asked too much at once, and it adopted the policy of "all or nothing." Had its proposals been more

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modest, the Referenda would have gone through without doubt. Thousands of people who would have voted "Yes" for many of the separate proposals were compelled to vote "No" for the scheme as it was presented to them *en bloc*. Great numbers of men were genuinely sorry to have been compelled to say "No" to certain of the proposals made, but the way in which the good and the bad were mixed together left them no alternative. The most regrettable thing was that, as the result of the voting, certain vicious monopolies continue to drain the purses of the people. The general feeling is that these monopolies should cease at once. Take the case of one city, in which is a fruit "ring" which keeps up fabulous prices for fruit sold retail. Apples, which are sold wholesale at half a crown the case of forty pounds, are priced at one penny and twopence each in the shops. And for oranges, which in England sell for one halfpenny, threepence each is demanded. There is apparently no power available to prevent the leeches of the ring from continuing their business. Then there is a fish ring, which outrageously robs the public. Fish in parts of Australia near the coast costs three times the price charged in England. Wood, which "up country" can be bought for six shillings a ton, costs twenty-five shillings in the capital. So also is it with coal, which is sold at an inflated price. And the public suffer and pay. If that part of the Referenda which had reference to this kind of thing had been detached from the rest, I believe it would have been universally approved, but

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the policy of "all or none" deprived the people of the boon.

Again in 1913 certain referenda were submitted to the Australian people for their decision. The questions were drawn up by the late Labour Government, submitted to the Governor-General for his signature, and circulated all over the Commonwealth. Every elector, male and female, had placed in his hand a complete statement of the case. Not only were the questions submitted, but upon the same pages the pros and cons of the case were set forth. The Liberals used their best arguments against the proposals, and entreated the electors to vote "No." The Labour men used their best arguments, and urged the electors to vote "Yes." The proposals were very simple. They were frankly Socialistic. They included the nationalisation of a number of industries, the fixing of prices for commodities, the destruction of trusts, and similar measures. The sacred formula of Labour in submitting these proposals was: "Shall the people rule?" The Liberals, on their part, steadfastly resisted the proposals on the ground that some of them were unjust, and that others were unnecessary, since it was alleged that the State already possessed sufficient power to deal with unfair monopolies. At first it was thought that the "Ayes" had it, but in the final count it was seen that the referenda were lost. Two facts stand out very clearly: the "Ayes" have gained considerably since the last time referenda were submitted, and the voting has been remarkably close. It is clear to all

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that the Commonwealth is almost equally divided in its opinion about the matter. We may take it as certain that each side put forth all its effort, and that, therefore, the late decision of the people fairly represents the state of mind in the country for some time to come.

More moderate referenda, and a different personnel, might have ensured victory for the proposals. For it is certain that there needs to be some change in Australia in certain directions. Faulty government in the early years of the life of Australia has produced, without doubt, certain abuses which ought to be swept away. The cost of living generally and the prices of certain commodities in particular both point to underlying radical wrongs which the referenda sought to remove. There can be no doubt that Socialistic ideas are gaining in Australia.* Labour is solid, and it is a force to be reckoned with. It is also a growing force. And if a conflict is to be avoided in the future, the principle of Christ will have to be applied, and men must agree with their adversaries while they are in the way with them.

The question of Protection or Free Trade is one upon which opinion is sharply divided. In all the Churches the best men take opposite sides in the matter. It is unwise, therefore, to introduce politics in any shape or form into pulpit or upon the religious platform. One party affirms Protection to be the

* As these pages are going to the press, the cable announces the return of Labour at the elections of 1914.

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insanest policy that Australia has committed itself to; another claims for Protection all the virtues. The practical facts are that for good clothing one pays 50 or 60 per cent. more than in England; house rent is higher than at home; taxes are lower; paper and printing are much dearer; furniture is very much dearer; tea is cheaper, but sugar is 40 or 50 per cent. dearer; books, of course, are dearer. A pamphlet which at home would sell for twopence costs sixpence in Australia. And so with other things. On the contrary, fruit is much cheaper, where the "ring" does not operate. Beautiful large eating apples sell for half a crown the case of 40 lbs. A large, juicy pineapple costs fourpence or sixpence. Bananas are cheap. Australians do not regard as "dear" what I should. They balance wages and expenditure. Many incomes are larger than in England. The great question has yet to be settled in Australia whether, after all, Protection does protect—*the right people*.

CHAPTER XXVIII

RELIGION IN AUSTRALIA

IN 1912 there were published the statistics of the religious census for the entire Commonwealth, and they form instructive reading. The face value of the figures is considerable. They seem to show that Australia is an extremely religious nation. The vast majority of the people claim to belong to one or other of the Churches. The Episcopal Church is at the top with 1,710,443 adherents; Roman Catholics and "other" Catholics, whatever that may mean, come next with a total of 999,450 persons. Then follow Presbyterians and Methodists, each with more than half a million adherents; Congregationalists and Baptists between them number 160,000; "Undefined" Protestants, 109,861; Lutherans, 72,395; Unitarians are at the bottom of the list with 2,175 adherents; Freethinkers return themselves as numbering 3,254; Agnostics, 3,084; Atheists, 579; while over 110,000 persons declined to make any declaration whatever.

These figures are very instructive, especially when compared with the returns of the last census taken a decade ago. In ten years Anglicans have increased 14 per cent., Presbyterians 30 per cent., Methodists 8 per cent., Baptists 9 per cent., Congregationalists

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6 per cent., and Roman Catholics 8 per cent. *Pro rata*, therefore, Presbyterians stand at the top by a long way. It is interesting to note that "Free-thinkers"—a very elastic term—have declined 65 per cent., while "Agnostics"—another very elastic term—have increased from 971 to 3,084. "Atheists" have doubled their numbers, rising from 274 to 579. Now, what is the value of these figures? To deal with the Atheists first. Their numbers are inconsiderable even at the high rate of increase which they show. Thirty years ago atheists were very numerous in the Commonwealth. At that time there was a propaganda led by a notorious person of very odd temperament. That phase of things has almost entirely passed away. The whole Commonwealth numbers only 579 Atheists, and one knows exactly where to find them. For the greater part they are composed of persons whose education is extremely defective and whose impertinence is unbounded. I speak of those whom I know in Melbourne and Sydney. We look for the handful of Atheists on the Yarra Bank in Melbourne and in the Domain in Sydney. To hear these gentlemen speak is not to be impressed so much with their Atheism as with their unbounded audacity, ignorance, and rudeness. Some of them display a banner containing the inscription: "No God, no masters." One of their speakers informed his audience that the inscription was the translation of the famous "*ni Dieu, ni maître*," and he pronounced it "*nee doo, nee mater*." Australians laugh at the noisy group of revolutionists. We were always given to under-

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stand that the number of Atheists was growing considerably, but the census figures came as a cold douche upon the amazing claims put forward by the sceptical party. The slump in "Freethinking" is remarkable, as is also the growth of Agnosticism. This latter, however, must not be taken too seriously. There are undoubtedly a number of estimable men of culture who are sincerely Agnostic. For these I have a real respect. Some of them I know well. Amongst them are one or two public teachers. But I am afraid the majority who label themselves Agnostics are intellectual *dilettanti*. The truth of this opinion may be gauged by the fact that of the many young men who have come to me with their religious difficulties—men who speak of themselves as "Agnostics"—I have not yet found one who had a real appreciation of the present trend of religious thought. They are still fighting the bogies of Ingersoll, or they are obsessed with the outgrown philosophy of Spencer, or they imagine that Haeckel represents the *ne plus ultra* of scientific thought. There is an immense amount of educational work yet to be accomplished in Australia on the religious side.

As regards the Church figures proper, it is natural that the Anglican and the Roman communions should claim the largest numbers. But it would be interesting to know how much of the professed attachment is real and how much is purely nominal. We all know that in England men put themselves down as belonging to the National Church who have no real relation to it. It is the

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same here. The real test of attachment to a Church is to be found in the number of active communicants and workers, and this information is withheld from us—rather, it was never sought.

The figures, while valuable, are quite superficial. More than four millions of people claim to belong to the Churches. If the claim were real, we should require to build many more churches than we at present possess. But, as a fact, not twenty-five per cent. of the population attend church regularly. There is much to be thankful for, but the condition of things is distinctly unsatisfactory. Abstinence from church, however, according to the census figures, is not due to the spread of Agnostic or Atheistic principles; it finds its reason in the sheer indifference of the majority of the people. One could wish there was enough of interest in religion to awaken hostility towards it, for hostility means life, while indifference means death. The indifference has no intellectual basis whatever in the vast majority of cases. In this seductive climate pleasure is the ruling passion. Men think of little else than enjoying themselves. Work (as little of it as possible), play, and sleep; this is the Australian trinity, adored by the many.

One reason for indifference or hostility to the Churches is found, as has already been indicated, in the grotesque misconceptions invented or fostered by certain Socialists. In one Labour weekly there is an incessant "girding" at the Churches. The clergy and Church members are eternally placed in the pillory. In a long paragraph headed "The Church

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a Buttress of Capitalism," this paper says: "Being blinded by superstition and sentiment, the workers have allowed themselves to be fooled and hoodwinked. They have believed what ecclesiastical diplomats, to serve ends of their own, chose to instil into their ignorant minds. They have believed, as these tricksters tell them, that they must be content to remain in the position of life in which it has pleased the Almighty to place them." The insane charge that our Churches are the homes of grasping capitalists, the places where the poor are taught to keep their position in humble dependence upon their betters, is recklessly untrue. For one thing, Australians would not support this kind of teaching for a single hour; for another, they never hear anything remotely approaching it. Invincible prejudice of this kind is pitiful, but it has the fatal effect of keeping many people outside the churches.

The broad question of religion in Australia cannot be considered without distinct reference to the influence of climate upon modes of thought and expression.

It is not, of course, concerning religion *per se* that there is any problem under the Southern Cross. Climate affects only the accidentals of our humanity; it does not touch the essentials. All that makes man man is found equally in Britain, America, Australia, the Orient, and the Islands. And the essence of religion—of Christianity—remains the same in any climate and under any conditions. Of all Christians, notwithstanding their colour, or habits,

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or surroundings, it is demanded that they shall obey their Master and conform their lives to His.

The problem concerns the form, or forms, which this religion shall take in a new world. The Anglo-Saxons who came out to Australia as pioneers brought with them their traditions — personal, domestic, social, religious. In the Old Land custom had decreed a certain type and standard of dress; a certain style of house; a certain mode of living. The pioneers, in transferring their bodies from Britain to Australia, transferred these styles and modes at the same time. They affected frock coats and silk hats—positive absurdities (the latter especially in a semi-tropical climate). They built many of their houses on the English plan—another absurdity. And they observed English hours of labour and business, and adopted English food—a final absurdity. This Sicilian or Greek climate demands a style of dress and a mode of life such as those which have been evolved by experience in the older countries rejoicing in a sun like ours. One day Australia will fit its Greek or Italian life into a suitable environment.

But the British who first came out also brought with them a set of traditional sentiments associated with their religion. December 21 was known to them as the shortest day of the year. Christmas was observed in a setting of ice and snow. Santa Claus was a creature of the cold, and appeared enveloped in furs. The Watch Night service was celebrated in the gloomiest time of the year. Advent was the

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ecclesiastical season appropriate, by reason of shortening days, for meditating upon the end of all things. On the long and dismal nights of December, Spohr's "Last Judgment" seemed a fitting work to be performed. And last, the pioneers—many of them Scotch—brought with them the Puritan spirit and austerity.

And the climate mocked these traditional sentiments. December 21 turned out to be the longest, the brightest, and often the hottest day of the year. Christmas fell in the midsummer, when frequently the heat is almost unsupportable. The familiar ice and snow were entirely absent. Santa Claus in furs appeared ludicrous. December was far too cheerful a month for the encouragement of gloomy thoughts upon the end of all things. The cricket and the frog, the 'possum and the jackass, the mina and the thrush, all threw out their defiant challenge to Spohr and his awe-inspiring work.

And the climate is triumphing. It is true the traditional "Father Christmas" appears in more than one place in Australia. But a new "Father Christmas" is arising. He does not descend chimneys, nor shiver with the cold, nor affect snow trappings. He drives along the streets in a bush wagon drawn by bush ponies. The new "Father Christmas" is an Australian, pure and simple. The children understand him and revere him—so far as Australian children revere anything. He is essentially modern. He has no ancient history behind him, and in this particular he matches the country. The new

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"Father Christmas" is a product of the climate. A new Christmas Day has also dawned. The dear old Christmas "at home" is—or was—a time of reunion. It was essentially a domestic festival. In Australia it is a holiday, pure and simple. Thousands of people take their annual vacation at Christmas, and thousands more leave home for mountain and seaside. The coastal steamers are crowded with passengers. At Christmastide the churches in the city are thinly attended; most of the regular worshippers are away on holiday. Again the climate has triumphed. Turkey and plum-pudding still garnish the tables, but they are doomed. It is only a question of time, and there will be celebrated underneath the Southern Cross a Christmas festival as different from that which is known "at home" as the poles are apart from each other.

A new "Watch Night" service has been created. Through dismal streets, with snow or sleet, and in the teeth of a biting wind, the old folk in the Old Country trudged to the warmed church on the last night of the year. When the clock sounded the hour of midnight everybody felt relieved. The tension was over. The corner had been turned. From that moment the days would lengthen until the height of summer. But in Australia there is nothing to suggest solemnity. The last night of the old year is a warm, delightful summer night, redolent with the perfume of a hundred balms and the stifling scent of a thousand flowers. Do what one will, it is impossible, in these conditions, to impart reality into a hymn which

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speaks of "Days and moments quickly flying." It is the fault of the climate. The Puritan spirit is departing—yea! has well-nigh departed. A handful of folk are left who would in no wise travel on the Sabbath nor permit the piano to be used for secular purposes. The pioneers were severe, austere, rigid in their Puritanism. The original "Scots' Church" resembled a barn. The present "Scots' Church" in the city is a cathedral, containing one of the finest organs in Victoria—or anywhere else. The contrast between the two buildings marks the difference between the Puritanical spirit of seventy years ago and the light, gay spirit of to-day. Fathers who would on no account pay visits on the Sabbath have begotten sons who go to church when they please—which is not often—and who spend the majority of their Sundays on the golf course or on the bay. The temper of the people has entirely changed. And the climate has done it.

The climate—behold the enemy! Shall we say that, varying the phrase of Gambetta? Or shall we condemn the people for yielding to its seductions? We have amongst us a great number of people who would be irreligious in any climate and under any conditions. The climate aids and abets them, but they themselves are the chief offenders, the guilty people upon whom the chief responsibility falls. We must leave them out of our consideration. The grave question remaining is, how the Church will adapt itself to the new conditions. The climate, unquestionably, is destroying many of the English religious

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traditions. A new tradition—or, rather, a new set of traditions—will have to be created. It is inevitable. A number of the Anglican clergy are realising this so far as their own Church is concerned. They openly express their conviction that the archaisms of the Prayer-book are a distinct hindrance to their work. The older people cling for dear life to the service they love. The younger generation is becoming impatient. The Anglican Church in Australia will have to follow the example of the Episcopal Church in America, and work out its own salvation. The day will come when a Governor-General from England will not be required. With his passing will also pass the Governor's pew in the Cathedral. The native Governor, like the American President, may be a Presbyterian or a Congregationalist or a Baptist, and he will worship at his own church. The Church of England in Australia will then be the Episcopal Church of Australia, and, like other Churches, it will have to stand upon its own merits. Many of the clergy see this, and desire to be ready against the new time. The same is true of other Churches. The English type will gradually pass, and give place to an Australian type of religious life. And the climate will largely determine the form that the new type must take. The danger is that it may be superficial. The hope for Australia, religiously, lies in a united Evangelical Church, the life of which will create its own form. To use the simile of our Lord, the new wine must be put into new bottles.

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The Anglican Church in Australia is seriously considering its relation to the mother Church at home.

A significant discussion took place two or three years back at the Anglican Provincial Synod held in Melbourne. A resolution was moved by an arch-deacon :

“That this Provincial Synod of Victoria respectfully requests the General Synod of Australia and Tasmania to consider the advisability and practicability of taking such steps as may be necessary to obtain authority from the Church of England to enable the Church in Australia to adapt the liturgy and discipline of the Church of England to the varied needs of Australia, provided that no step be taken that will destroy the nexus between the Church in England and the Church in Australia.”

An amendment was moved by the then Dean Stephen—one of the finest Anglicans in Australia—that the last clause of the resolution be omitted; and the amendment was lost. But only for a time. Young Churchmen possessing vision are impatient with the yoke imposed upon them by Canterbury and York. They say, quite frankly, that it is ridiculous for the Anglican Church in Australia to be under the dominion of the two English provinces which legislate for conditions so entirely different from those obtaining in the new country. The view of Australian-born Anglicans is that they ought to think Imperially, and that their connection should be with the whole Episcopal communion rather than with the

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two English provinces. In fine, the Episcopal Church in Australia needs autonomy. It was noticed that the Australians almost to a man stood with Dean Stephen, while those on the Conservative side were "imported" clergymen, such as the Archbishop, good Dean MacCullagh, and others. There is no doubt about it that, sooner or later, the question of separation will have to be faced. As Australia develops its own clergy, the "imports" will be reduced, and finally they will cease, and then autonomy will be granted. The "Episcopal Church of Australia" in communion with the Episcopal Churches elsewhere will better represent the genius of the Australian people than a "Church of England" in Australia. . . . And sympathetic lookers-on clearly perceive that the change would be to the immense gain of the Church in Australia. The development is worth watching.

Meanwhile another movement has been started, tending in the direction of Church union. At the beginning of 1913 a leading layman belonging to the Congregational Church invited to dinner at the Grand Hotel a company of eighty leaders of the Protestant Churches, to whom he unfolded his plans. At this gathering it was decided to hold in Melbourne an unofficial Congress of the Churches in the month of September, 1913. Membership in the Congress was to be entirely personal, in order that the fullest and frankest discussion of the problems involved might be discussed, without reference to official decisions. The idea was to create an atmosphere which, in its

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turn, might be expected to permeate the Church Synods and other official bodies.

To be quite frank, many of those who approved of the idea were not at all sanguine as to the ultimate result of the Congress; they thought that the scheme would end in talk, yet they were willing to go forward, if only in the interests of a finer fraternal feeling. But it soon became evident that a deeply serious spirit was at work. Men who were regarded as *hors concours* rallied to the cause. The Anglicans, who at first had been tacitly left out of the reckoning, expressed a hearty desire to join in the movement. And at once I have to say, as one who sat on two of the Commissions, that, if the movement accomplished nothing further than the bringing together in friendly and frank conference men of the most diverse minds, it more than justified itself. The hours we spent together in trying to understand each other's positions, and in seeking a synthesis of our opposing views and practices, were amongst the most sacred of our lives. In fact, we were all amazed at the discovery we made of each other's real and essential Christianity. Men who passed each other in the streets for years without a sign of recognition, and with mutual suspicion, at last supped together, prayed together, communed together, and learned to love each other. Members of eight Churches formed the Congress, i.e. Anglican, Brethren, Baptist, Church of Christ, Congregationalist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and the Society of Friends. Three Commissions were formed: The first to consider

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"The Standardisation of College Curricula, and the possibility of Combined Theological Education"; the second to consider "The Union Control of Home Missions," and the third to consider "The Difficulties and Possibilities of Organic Union." These bodies sat during the space of four months to collect evidence, to reduce differences to the minimum, and to prepare a report for discussion at the Congress itself.

The daily Press rendered great service from the very first. It allowed representative men to write special (and lengthy) articles on Church union, and expressions of opinion were freely invited. The religious Press, it need hardly be said, was equally sympathetic. And so, long before the Congress was opened, a kindly atmosphere was created.

The *personnel* of the Congress was remarkable. At the opening reception the Lord Mayor (a Roman Catholic) offered the most cordial greetings to the guests, which included several Anglican Bishops, Presidents of Conference, Moderators of Assemblies, and Chairmen of Unions.

The temper of the Congress was admirable—yea, perfect. It was understood from the beginning that nothing should be suppressed; that no man should, for reasons of courtesy or delicacy, conceal his convictions; that every difficulty should, as far as possible, be openly faced. A few extreme things were said—things that might well have produced irritation. But whatever was felt, no sign of hostility was displayed. Speakers were applauded for their frankness, even when the frankness stung. It would

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be fatiguing to follow the course of the sessions; all that I aim at is to set forth the results which were arrived at.

And first with regard to Commission No. 1. The findings of the Commission were as follows: It was unanimously agreed that an effort be forthwith made to raise the standard of theological education and unite the forces available towards this end by adopting a system of co-operation in theological education such as now prevails in Montreal. This means that the students of the various theological colleges may now have common training in all great subjects, such as Old and New Testament language and literature, Church History, Biblical Theology, Historical Theology, Philosophy of Religion, Apologetics, Comparative Study of Religion, Homiletics, Sociology, Missions, etc. For this purpose it was suggested that a common hall should be erected, or, failing this, that the largest available room in any of the existing colleges should be used for the purpose of giving common lectures on the subjects specified. A full and complete time-table was drawn up by the Chairman of the Commission. The wisdom of this arrangement is apparent to all. Each student will now have the advantage of the very best instruction given by the very best available professors. In place of paddling in a shallow pool, each man may now swim in the deep water. Nothing better than this will break down that provincialism which has been for too long the curse of small colleges. Australia, in particular, needs that broader

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outlook which a more generous education of the type proposed alone can give. In pioneering days simpler teaching was ample; now that the times have changed, and Australia is sharing the culture of the old world, the highest ministerial equipment is demanded.

There was no difficulty with regard to Commission No. 2. Everybody had recognised in a general way the scandal of overlapping in Home Mission districts. But the evidence collected by the Commission determined the Congress to insist upon the immediate cessation of this scandal. We heard of small "townships" (there are no "villages" in Australia) consisting of 200 people, in which two or three churches were struggling for less than a bare existence. We realised the enormous waste of energy and of money which this scandalous state of things entails. The report of the Commission was heartily endorsed that this overlapping "constitutes a problem of the most serious order, and is a reproach which the Churches are bound in honour to efface." Pending the coming organic union in which the entire question would be immediately settled, the Commission suggested the forming of an Advisory Committee of the Churches, to which all proposals of denominational extension shall be referred, as also all questions relating to overlapping and co-operation. There is no need to enumerate the details of the scheme; it is sufficient to state the general principle.

The most serious work of the Congress was reserved for the last day, when "the difficulties and

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possibilities of organic union" were discussed. Each of the Churches supplied a statement of what it regarded as essential to real union. These statements were subsequently amended (save in one case) so as to narrow the issue. Methodists, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians were seen to be in practical agreement upon all main things, and the opinion was openly expressed that there was no valid reason why they should remain apart. The real difficulties in the way to union seemed to come from the Anglican and the Baptist Churches: the one in its doctrine of Orders, the other in its doctrine and practice of Baptism. And yet in both cases the olive branch was generously held out. The Anglican representatives so modified their statement regarding the Historic Episcopate and Orders as to bring it within reasonable approach to the Free Church doctrine of the ministry. The Baptist representatives committed the following statement to writing:

"The committee think they are warranted in saying that our people generally would be prepared to leave the question of baptism quite open—for each person to receive according to his conscience—and not to make it a test of Church membership. That is to say, in the interests of a great movement towards unity, they, on their part, would not make baptism a test question, one way or another. While firmly believing that the baptism of intelligent believers in Christ is the best safeguard of spiritual Church membership, inasmuch as the candidate of his own will yields to the yoke of Christ, yet they believe

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that the majority of Baptists would consider the question of the unity of the Churches to be the major question, hence they would be willing . . . to cease to demand the immersion of intelligent believers as a *sine qua non* of Church membership. They could not surrender the truth of believers' baptism, yet they would be prepared to admit the broader basis of Church membership. . . . Is it too much to ask those Churches which practise infant baptism to so reconsider their position as (while guarding the ideas of infant and parental dedication) to throw greater emphasis upon that later personal dedication to Christ which the Baptist rite expresses?"

The total result of this Commission is thus summarised: "The formal obstacles to union have been more clearly defined than ever before, and the Commission believe they will be regarded as smaller than they were supposed to be."

Such was the Congress. Without doubt it accomplished a world of good. It cleared the air, it brought us all closer together. And what now remains to be done? First of all a Continuation Committee was appointed to further the next work of the Congress, to meet in further conference, to grapple with the few remaining obstacles that lie in the path to union, and to bring the whole subject before the various Church Courts. The Congress represented the *élite* of the Churches, the most thoughtful, the most advanced, the most influential. The difficulty may lie with the rank and file of the Churches, those in whom prejudice is most firmly established, and

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from whom it is with greater difficulty dislodged—the ill-informed, the uncharitable, the stubborn. To conquer these may not be easy, but it will be finally sure if we have patience. In a land like Australia, with its keen problems, its democratic life, its great future, and its freedom from hampering traditions, there should easily be established one great United Australasian Evangelical Church.

CHAPTER XXIX

IN VAN DIEMEN'S LAND—AN IMPRESSION

THE sight of a map such as this map of Tasmania which lies before me causes an Englishman who beholds it for the first time to deal severely with himself, to interrogate himself concerning his habits, to assure himself beyond the shadow of a doubt that he is really temperate. For it is a study in topsyturvydom, and the contrariness of the thing lies either in the remarkable map itself or in the man who reads it.

Imagine a nice fat slice of the middle of the map of England, clearly cut out and converted into a separate chart, with a new disposition of the counties thus: To the north, Dorset, Devon, and Cornwall together; below these, Westmorland; by the side of Westmorland, Lincoln; below Westmorland, Somerset, by the side of which is Glamorgan; and at the bottom of all, Kent. Now, think of a country with a map like that. Surely it is not superfluous to reaffirm the correctness of one's personal habits, in declaring that this map really exists. And, looking into it a little farther, one sees marked a river Jordan, and the towns of Jericho, Tiberias, and Bagdad, while in a footnote the informa-

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tion is conveyed that "Sheffield enjoys an exhilarating climate, being situated in a high altitude." Sheffield, of all places !

When, however, the first feeling of amusement created by the sight of the map has passed away, one readily understands how this curious collection of counties came into existence. Little by little the life of the island country has developed, and love in high places has sought to perpetuate, by means of the dear old names, some of the sweet memories of the far-away land which sent its sons and daughters to people the empty space of the lone southern country. Caprice probably accounts for Jericho and Tiberias.

Tasmania guards the old English names; but, more than that, it guards, better than does Australia proper, the characteristics of old English life. For one thing, the climate permits this. In Australia, during a great part of the year, the surroundings are utterly un-English. Mild winters, scorching summers, the absence of snow and ice, the presence of native flora, create a social life and surroundings which never recall the Old Country, with its wonderful green grass, its unique hedges, and carefully sheltered abodes. Little wonder, then, that the new generation of Australians fails entirely to understand the conditions of English life, or to sympathise with them. Its youth read a cable announcing that "snow has fallen continuously in England for twenty-four hours," and they murmur, "*What a country !*"

But in Tasmania so many things recall the Old

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Land. The climate is English *at the best*, with the exception of the west coast, where it always seems to be raining. There is a patch of country on that coast where the rainfall reaches the amazing total of 140 inches per annum. But that is pure extravagance. The inhabitants of that quarter appear to be very contented; they make every provision to meet the odd requirements of the climate, and as they are happy it is not our affair to quarrel with them.

Apart from the west coast, Tasmania is an ideal place of residence. I had the pleasure of traversing the island from end to end, and it completely captured me. I am no longer astonished that so many Anglo-Indians, their professional work achieved, find in Tasmania a final home. Unable, after the heat of India, to live in England, they find Tasmania an ideal residence. The climate, generally speaking, resembles that of Cornwall. At midsummer the average temperature is only 63 degrees, while at midwinter it is 43 degrees. Thus the terrible heat to which we in Victoria were occasionally subjected at midsummer is nearly unknown in Tasmania. And one happy consequence is that all kinds of fruit grown in Britain are grown in Tasmania, which is more than we can say of Australia. Two crops of strawberries appear each year—in December and February. During the nearly five years of my residence in Melbourne strawberries have been taboo. Australia cannot produce strawberries worthy of the name. The climate forbids. But in Hobart we come to our own again. The strawberries placed upon our table at

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the hotel are equal to any we formerly tasted in Kent or Sussex.

Life in Tasmania possesses many English characteristics. Launceston and Hobart are to all intents and purposes English towns. The "villa" or bungalow type of house, so common in Australia, is comparatively rare in Tasmania. The fronts of the houses are directly exposed to the sun. The familiar English "terrace" is repeated in Tasmania, while small flights of stone steps, carefully whitened, lead from the pavement to the front door. In some places the dismal London "basement" is found. Again and again, when walking or driving through the several towns of the island, have I imagined myself to be in the Midlands of the Old Country, and at times in Penzance. The lazy leisure of those smaller English towns is duplicated in the Tasmanian centres. Nobody is in a hurry. The island is limited, and there are no express trains nor greyhound steamers to catch. The mail from beyond enters and is dispatched three times per week. There is but one day and one night train in the twenty-four hours between Launceston and Hobart. Why, then, should anyone kill himself with over-exertion? Mail days alone are the bustling days, and the apple season alone the strenuous one. For the rest, life moves smoothly and easily.

There are two or three ways of approaching Tasmania from the mainland. The popular route from Victoria is by steamer to Launceston, and thence to Hobart, or the west and east coasts by rail. A second

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route is by the New Zealand steamers, which call first at Hobart. And a third route is the round tour by sea, touching the two chief cities and the important coastal towns. The first two routes, once the terrors of the sea are over, are romantically beautiful. In the one case the steamer proceeds for the final three hours up the course of the River Tamar; in the other case, up the course of the River Derwent. Of the two, the scenery of the Derwent is far more attractive. Mountains rise from the edge of the water, in which, as in a perfect mirror, they are marvellously reflected. The bay at Hobart rivals Sydney Harbour. Indeed, many travellers prefer it to Sydney. It cannot, of course, compare for a moment with Sydney for extent, but, flanked by the mass of Mount Wellington, it possesses a majesty which Sydney lacks.

In the summer-time Tasmania is essentially a pleasure resort for the parched and panting inhabitants of the mainland. It offers every conceivable attraction to visitors. It is a land of rivers, of mountains, of valleys, and of exhilarating plateaux. Here, in the long ago, when Tasmania was joined to the Australian land, Nature engaged in one of her titanic conflicts. Violent eruptions took place, terrible separations occurred, and to-day the island bears witness, in many a gash and elevation and depression, to the character of the convulsions which rent its life in far-away ages. Nature, as is her way, has concealed most of the scars with coverings of rare beauty. The mountains, flung up by appalling forces, are covered with the everlasting eucalyptus, the

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stately wattle, and shrubs and undergrowth of every hue. In the winter and late on into the spring Mount Wellington is covered with snow. Then Hobart possesses its fairest setting. At a place called Fern Tree, situated on the slopes of Mount Wellington at an elevation of 2,000 feet above the sea, we came across a very beautiful resting place. One solitary hotel and a few boarding-houses contain the total of population. Well named is the locality, for giant tree ferns flourish in the neighbouring gullies. There are masses of huge fronds so dense and interlaced as to form a veritable Indian jungle, and the presence of an occasional tiger-snake completes the Indian picture. From the veranda of the best boarding-house I have stayed at for many a long day the view of mountain and gully is perfect. Behind, in the distance, lies the harbour of Hobart, the warships of the Australian Squadron resting upon its bosom. Here we are out of the world, breathing mountain air that recalls Switzerland. We are enveloped with the quietness of Eden.

In this land of mountains, hills, and valleys there is abundance of water. Droughts, such as periodically visit Australia, are unknown here. The rainfall is even and plentiful. And always there are the lakes situated in high altitudes. The Great Lake has a circumference of ninety miles. While these abide, the supply of water is sure. On the railway journey between Launceston and Hobart an excellent idea of the undulating character of the country is obtained. The line is sinuous and at times nerve-straining. To

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avoid tunnelling, the sides of the mountain are skirted, and it is no uncommon thing for a traveller to look out of the window and to behold his train bent like a serpent, its head and tail gliding in approved reptile fashion. Small as is Tasmania, it boasts no fewer than fifty mountains, the altitudes of which range from 2,500 to 5,000 feet. These elevations result in a wonderfully pure air, and in a bracing climate in which neither malaria nor chest affections can flourish.

But to every rule there is an exception, and we have been unlucky enough to taste the exception. We fled from Melbourne to escape the wicked heat. The city and suburbs were stifling. Day after day the north wind blew; at noon the temperature rose to 107 degrees in the shade, and at midnight the glass registered 90 degrees in the bedroom. The adults in our home barely clothed themselves, while the children, dressed in bathing costumes, were placed in the bath to "play seaside," and thus to keep cool. We came to Tasmania for coolness, and then, what had not happened in the island for forty years, and what may not again happen for another forty, *did* happen. The heat wave followed us, and for three days Tasmania experienced the horrors of inferno. We tried the river, hoping to find a breeze, but the breath that greeted us was as from the mouth of an oven. On the third day bush fires broke out spontaneously all over the island. Motorists, whose route lay through the bush, had to cover themselves with rugs and to rush through the heat at speed far beyond

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that permitted by law. Some handsome cars emerged from the ordeal blistered and burned and spoiled. Trains ran a gauntlet of fire. One curious passenger, protruding his head to see what was the matter, fell back into the carriage with beard and eyebrows well singed. The city and the country were enveloped in a great heat haze impregnated with the smoke from a hundred fires. Upon the night before the wave broke we ascended an eminence and beheld a terrifying spectacle. The entire countryside seemed to be on fire. Great red flames licked up the grass and undergrowth, and embraced, to their death, the giant eucalyptus trees. Men watched with anxiety solitary houses which lay in the path of the fire. At last the naval brigade was called out to try to beat down the flames. At dawn the hill-side was still smouldering here and there, while great charred patches showed how completely the flames had done their work. A few hours later the rain fell, and men bared their faces to its refreshing coolness. Soon Tasmania recovered its normal climate, and we rejoiced in a keen and bracing atmosphere amongst the mountains.

CHAPTER XXX

THE ROMANCE OF TASMANIA

IF, to the average Briton, Australia represents the limit of distance from "home," what can Tasmania, New Zealand, and the Islands of the Southern Pacific represent? They are the limit beyond the limit; the uttermost stretch of far-awayness. That is the reason, perhaps, why Englishmen think of Tasmania with a shiver, especially if they happen to know its history. The present name of the island—Tasmania—holds less of terror than did the former name—Van Diemen's Land. There was something sinister in the very name, especially when it was wrongly spelled, as by the budding aspirant to geographical fame—Van Demon's Land. Van Diemen himself was a shadowy personality, of whom the average school geographer knew nothing whatever. The land itself, however, was well known as a convict settlement, even by those who knew nothing more about it; and with Van Diemen *plus* the convicts, there seemed to be a subtle suggestion of a land of fire—a second Tierra del Fuego. The reason cannot easily be explained; but the fact is undeniably there. Men thought of Van Diemen's Land with a kind of horror.

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But now, this same land, with the softer name of Tasmania, has become famous as the great home of the apple, and as the sanatorium, for sick and healthy folk alike, of the Southern Pacific. And in the new name of the country its discoverer has at length come to his own. It frequently happens in this world of ours that to the wrong man fall the honours. Van Diemen was the Governor of the Batavian Dutch Settlement, and he it was who sent out Tasman on successive voyages of discovery. Tasman did the work, and Van Diemen reaped the honours. To Tasman belongs the credit of discovering the great South land, of which Tasmania is now a part. Exactly 270 years have passed since the hitherto unknown island was marked upon the map of the world. The Dutch, however, although the discoverers of the island, were not its occupiers. They noted its existence and passed on. It was reserved for Britain—all-encompassing Britain—to add this neglected strip of territory to its expanding Empire, and that in the year 1803. I have been fortunate enough to encounter several experts in Tasmanian history; men who, from various points of view, have studied the life of the island; newspaper men, librarians, the curator of the museum, an elderly clergyman, and several old settlers. And I shall set down what they have told me.

The transition from the old state of things to the new is one of the marvels of the New World. At the commencement of the nineteenth century the island was a great bush waste. It consisted of mountains

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and forests, rivers and lakes, as at present, but the land was uncultivated. There were no roads. Not an apple grew. Wild beasts, wild birds, and wild men divided the territory between them. Tasmania was off the highway of the world—a scrap-heap upon which savages dwelt. And to-day this island, about the size of Scotland and an integral part of the Australasian Commonwealth, is one of the most fruitful places upon God's earth. It does a large trade in fruit, minerals, wool, timber and agricultural produce. It has established a number of important towns, each a centre of industry. It grows strawberries and hops equal to the best grown in Kent. It offers trout fishing of such a character as to satisfy the ambition of the biggest boaster of grand catches. Politically it is free; the women have the franchise. Commercially it is successful. Many men have made a fortune through its commerce, while its small population of less than 200,000 persons has managed to deposit in the public banks nearly four millions sterling, and in the savings bank more than a million and a half. The railways are owned by the State. In the matter of education, full provision is made for the instruction of all. There is a university with an excellent staff of professors. The education is non-sectarian in the day schools, but the clergy of the various denominations are allowed to give religious instruction either during or after school hours, as may be convenient for all concerned. School fees are very moderate, and in the case of the very poor the education is entirely free. In cases where children reside more than two

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miles from a State school, free railway tickets to and from the nearest station are provided by the Department.

The land is thus cleared and civilised. A few ugly creatures still infest the forests. The serpent is always to be dreaded. It is an unwritten law that any man who encounters a serpent shall at once, if he can, break its back. Sometimes the serpent is too sharp for its antagonist, inflicting a wound and then escaping. Men who penetrate into the bush carry with them a small outfit against the bite of the snake. The remedy is drastic. The flesh around the wound is immediately cut with a knife, permanganate of potash is dropped into it, and then the flesh above the wound is tightly bound with a ligature. This is first-aid until the services of a doctor are secured. The "Tasmanian Devil" I have seen only in the museum. It is a horrible-looking creature, in appearance like a bear, of nocturnal habits, and very fond of attacking sheep. One day, perhaps, a substantial Saint Patrick will be able to boast that he has cleared the land of snakes.

The story of Tasmania since it became a part of the British Empire is not altogether a pleasant one. It opens with a page of convict history. The Governor of New South Wales, finding himself in Sydney with a glut of convicts on hand, thought of Tasmania as a means of relieving the congestion. So there came to the south of the island—to Hobart Town—an assortment of choice criminals, transported from England for offences more or less dreadful.

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Those were the days when brutality reigned upon the bench, when a man was hanged for sheep stealing, and when, for a political offence, a man sacrificed his liberty. We must not too hastily assume that all the convicts sent out in those barbarous days were really bad men. Many of them to-day would be good-naturedly allowed to continue their harangues. But others of the convicts belonged to the dregs of society. They were thieves, murderers, unredeemed villains. And this motley crowd came to Hobart. Prison discipline at that time was both severe and lax. Sometimes devilishly severe, as in the case of a soldier who, convicted of drunkenness and using abusive language, was sentenced to receive *nine hundred* lashes. On the other hand, discipline was as lax as possible. The convicts were required to work for a certain number of hours per day for the Government. These tasks completed, they were turned out to shift for themselves, which they did with amazing energy. The desperadoes amongst them immediately returned to their old ways. Robberies with violence and burglaries were of frequent occurrence. The streets at night were quite unsafe for pedestrians. Some of the convicts escaped from their captors and took to bushranging. When the settlers arrived and began farming, the bushrangers immediately attacked them, with others, as their legitimate prey. At one time the colony was in a state of practical anarchy. Morality was unknown. The most amazing transactions took place. The open "sale" of wives was common. There is upon record a "deal" in which a

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man sold his wife for a five-pound note and a bottle of rum. And nobody protested. And all this less than a century ago, and under the British flag. Yet there are men in our time, adepts at misreading the prophetic books of the Bible, who continue to assert that the world is growing ever worse. They do not know the history of that world which they so pitilessly condemn.

The transportation of convicts and the importation of settlers to Tasmania speedily created another problem—that of the aborigines. The natives of the island had to be met and dealt with. Numerically they were not an important people, but they were the proprietors of the territory, hence some terms had to be made with them. The Tasmanian native offered to anthropologists a knotty problem. Here was a pure savage of the most degraded type known. In no way had civilisation touched him. He belonged to an ancient age, so it was said. Cut off from the mainland, he had experienced no contact with the aboriginal of the great continent beyond. He possessed no stone weapons. His instruments of killing were fabricated of wood. He had never learned the art of fastening a sharp stone head to a piece of wood in order to increase his power of smiting. His spears were pointed, but not with iron. He had no domestic animal for friend. The dog was unknown to him. His social habits were primitive and disgusting. He lived upon shell fish, birds and eggs, and he was expert in spearing fish. He treated his women folk badly. He never practised the delectable

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art of kissing. And he was a polygamist. Of clothing he was entirely innocent. Faint traces of religious belief were found in him. He burned his dead and smeared his face with the ashes of the calcined corpse. Authentic portraits of the aborigines in the museum at Hobart represent them as exceedingly gross and repulsive people. The chiefs cultivated their hair in a peculiar style; it fell into ringlets, like ram's wool, over their faces. The wives of the chiefs had little trouble with their hair. They disposed of it all by the simple process of clean shaving. Their heads were as smooth as a billiard ball.

Now, whence came these people? The theories concerning them are innumerable. One claims them as perfect specimens of primitive man of the Palæolithic Age. Another deduces evidence which shows them to be degenerates. The truth is that all the theories are echoes of previous prejudices. The Tasmanian savage will ever remain a mystery. No man really knows his history. All that is really certain is that when civilisation discovered him he was a filthy savage, more likely a degenerate than a starting-point.

The inevitable conflict came, provoked, one is ashamed to say, not by the savages, but by the cruelty of the early settlers. Mr. Bonwick, in his history of Tasmania, tells some horrible tales of the devilry of those early white men. Two gentlemen of Hobart told me that they well remember, when boys, how white men would go into the bush on a Sunday

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morning "blackbirding"—that is, shooting down the natives for "sport." It was considered a grand game.

The natives, themselves savage and cruel, returned the insult, and for years there was a deadly feud between whites and blacks. Then came a war of extermination, mingled with a mission of conciliation. The Government issued pictorial proclamations setting forth the character of official British justice. A black and white boy were represented clothed, and standing with linked arms. Underneath the Governor was seen shaking hands with a black; while at the bottom a black man was shown shooting a white man and being hanged upon a tree for the offence. This was completed by the representation of a white man shooting a black and being hanged for the crime. These rude pictures, which conveyed British ideas of justice to the blacks, were affixed to trees in the bush.

The final work of conciliation was effected by a Mr. Robinson, a Methodist, who did what the Government alone could not have done. This man, a bricklayer, touched with the sorrows of the blacks, opened his house to them and became their friend. He learned their language, and then, aided by the Government, went out into the wilds to preach glad tidings to the natives. In a few years he succeeded in bringing into Hobart the entire native population, to be protected. Some of the horrible savages became Christians, and, according to Mr. Bonwick, died with words upon their lips of which no white Christian need be

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ashamed. The rest—it is a sordid story—fell into civilised ways and took to drinking spirits. That hastened the end—the race speedily died out. In 1869 one male aboriginal alone survived. In 1864 he had appeared, of all places, at a *ball* given at Government House. He was the last man of his race—a curiosity exhibited at a dance. From this his decline was rapid. He was seldom sober, and in 1869, after a drunken bout, he perished. Trucanini, the last aboriginal woman, died in 1876. The race is now extinct. Our people have no cause to pride themselves upon some of their history in Tasmania. But a new generation has come, and it is for them to maintain Tasmania at that moral, as well as commercial and social height, which it is the glory of Britain now to maintain.

CHAPTER XXXI

A PARADISE OF FRUIT

WHO in England does not know the Tasmanian apple—rosy, juicy, and expensive—appearing about Easter, and continuing until the English orchards yield their own annual output? A foreign and delectable fruit is this apple, welcome enough in the off season “at home.”

I am writing in the very heart of Tasmania, in the midst of a wonderful valley, covered with huge crops of hops and apples. We have done two days of motoring, and in the aggregate have covered many thousands of acres, yet never have we lost the view of immense orchards and hop gardens. From a score of heights we have gazed upon plains and valleys unsurpassed for loveliness and fertility. We are in the true home of the apple.

The house in which we are now staying is a roomy, old-fashioned farm-house, built after the English pattern, with certain Tasmanian features added, the whole being surrounded by an old-world garden, such as is seen in small English country towns or large English villages. We are playing at an English holiday, and cheating ourselves with the sweet illusion that the railway yonder really goes

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to London. Everything here is so English that it would occasion no surprise to discover that this old-fashioned railway is the branch of an English trunk line to London.

To this place we came from Glenorchy, where Dr. Benjafield, the Medical Officer of Health, has one of the finest pear orchards in the southern hemisphere. Two better centres of the apple and pear industry than Glenorchy and Bushy Park it would be impossible to find. All that can be known about the cultivation of the apple and the pear we learn here, from the very beginning of the process when the bush is cleared and fruit saplings are planted until the moment of packing for the English market. Roaming over these enormous expanses of cultivated land, it appears almost incredible that this fertility is the work of a comparatively few years. In the Old Land orchards very frequently have a history. Here there has been no time for making history. A few years ago this country was covered with a stubborn scrub, surmounted with the giant eucalyptus. To-day it has been brought under the dominion of man, to whom it yields a marvellous profit. A system of almost perfect irrigation has converted land which aforetime was worth ten shillings an acre into fertile orchards which to-day could not be bought for two or three hundred times that amount.

No fewer than 200 varieties of apples are grown in Tasmania, including all the best English fruit, such as Ribstons, Cox's Orange, and the like. As to pears, one grower alone cultivates seventy varie-

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ties, and he boasts, with pardonable pride, that his fruit has graced the table of King George. An afternoon spent on his estate was a perfect revelation of the possibilities of the soil. We stood in the centre of one of the largest orchards I have ever seen, and gazed along avenues of fruit trees extending half a mile in length. Pear and apple trees occupied the ground, the former predominating. The fruit was so plentiful that in scores of cases it completely hid the wood of the branches from view. Enormous branches, bending under their healthful weight, literally touched the ground, and here and there was the spectacle of branches broken in twain by reason of the excess of fruit they bore. Some of the pears weigh eighteen ounces when fully ripe, and Dr. Benjafield assured me that they fetched as much as a shilling each, wholesale, in Covent Garden Market. In this orchard, one of five owned by him, were no fewer than 5,000 pear trees. Had the camera been able faithfully to depict the fruit-laden trees, I would have sent some photographs home; but, unfortunately, the protruding fruit is not so distinct from the leaf in a photograph as to give the desired impression.

Orcharding means fortune for the majority of growers if they will attend to their business, cleaning their ground, pruning the trees, and spraying against the dreaded codling-moth. One grower openly admitted that, as a professional man, he had earned nearly £2,000 a year, but the fruit industry paid him better. Year by year the output increases. One

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estate of 290 acres that I visited is only five years old, and yet in that short time it has yielded 80,000 cases of apples, each case containing from forty to fifty pounds weight of fruit. The ambition of Tasmania is to become the chief fruit-producing area of the southern hemisphere. This year it is likely that a million cases will be shipped from Hobart to Great Britain, South America, and Europe.

These facts and figures show what a change is passing over an island which a century ago was the haunt of the most degraded aboriginal known. And how easily it might have been Dutch or French instead of British! Pride of the flag is most naturally engendered at the view of these wonderful conquests of Britain's mind and toil.

Orcharding in Tasmania—and, for that matter, in Australia also—offers certain hints which the British “at home” would do well to heed. The Australian and the Tasmanian understand the art of making their fruit trees produce the maximum of yield with the minimum of labour and expenditure. It is true that the unparalleled climate has much to do with their success. But I was a little astonished to learn that poor soil—third-rate soil—produces the best results in apples. The secret lies, not in the richness of the soil, but in careful irrigation and in careful pruning. The trees are what in England would be called dwarfs. They rarely exceed eight or ten feet in height. They are thus dwarfed so as to dispense with the loss of time in the use of ladders. All the fruit can be picked by men standing on the earth or upon

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small boxes, or by boys who leap into the fork of the tree, and from that elevation gather the fruit. This method makes an astonishing difference to the time and expense of plucking.

Not only are the trees deliberately dwarfed, but they are so pruned that all the fruit is thrown into six or seven large branches, which are thick with apples, growing as low down as a foot from the ground. Thus, by the cutting away of all inner branches, light and air gain access to every part of the tree. It is a simple method of cultivation, but it is highly successful. In addition to this, the growers practise what is called "summer pruning." Two or three weeks before the apples are gathered all superfluous small branches and leaves are removed, so that the sun can reach every apple on the tree. The appearance of apple trees developed on this system is rather curious at first, and it contrasts unfavourably with the large and bushy aspect of trees in an English orchard; but, judged by results, the Tasmanian and Australian system is far preferable to the English system.

As I write, the picking season is in full swing. We are following the entire process. Swarms of men and boys invade the orchards, filling their bags with the golden fruit. But oh! the holocaust! It is enough to make a man weep to see the thousands of "rejects." The tiniest speck in an apple, a little sun-burn, or the merest suspicion of the codling-moth is sufficient to cause the fruit to be flung upon the ground. Only sound fruit, absolutely perfect, is

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allowed to be packed. Lynx-eyed inspectors open each case of apples upon the wharf, and defect in a single apple means condemnation for the entire case. In the packing-sheds each apple is wrapped in a separate piece of paper before being committed to the case. Clever workers can earn as much as ten or eleven shillings a day by wrapping up the fruit. They are paid a penny a case of, say, one hundred and fifty or sixty apples. Think of the rapid manipulation of the fingers which, at this rate of work, can earn eleven shillings a day! It means the handling of twenty thousand separate pieces of fruit.

The healthfulness of the orchardist's life is apparent to all. Dr. Benjafield, in presenting his annual report as Medical Officer of Glenorchy, declared that the health of the municipality, a district of one hundred square miles, had established for the year a world's record—not a death from preventible infectious disease; one case only of true consumption; the death-rate nearly down to zero. Dr. Benjafield is a medico trained in London and Edinburgh, and he has been in Tasmania for thirty years. Besides being Medical Officer of Health, he is an orchardist on his own account, and he speaks of health in the orchard thus :

"I have seen for myself the great things which are included in life in a garden. I have seen many babies born in the district, but never a mother died. I have seen rollicking, toothless, fat babies munching away at red apples, or stuffing in raw straw-

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berries, and their mothers just laughed at the horror on my face; and when the thermometer stands at 90 degrees or 100 degrees sunstroke never troubles them."

The much-lauded "simple life" is the general life here—"early to bed and early to rise"—and then the whole day in the sunshine—pruning in winter, digging and ploughing in spring, weeding and spraying, in big apple and pear orchards, and picking small fruits in early summer, and later on the harder fruits as they come in, until the great autumn gatherings close the season.

There is no hustle here—a great thing that in the battle of life. Each worker has own row to hoe, and pretty well his own time that he takes to do it.

In the next chapter I shall say something of the orchards as a desirable investment for English workers.

Meanwhile, let us follow the fruit to the end. When all the sound fruit has been exported there remain millions of "rejects," which are sent to the jam factory and there converted to profitable uses. At Hobart we inspected a large factory where every kind of jam is made and many kinds of fruit preserved. The process is wonderfully clean, most of the fruit being untouched by hand. A great deal of "pulp" is sent to England, to be there treated and converted into preserve, but the jam itself is not exported, because English people have a great prejudice against tinned preserves. This is a pity,

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and the prejudice is entirely without foundation since the introduction of enamelled tins. If this prejudice could only be overcome, Englishmen might taste a new sensation at present denied to most of them—peach jam. Australia and Tasmania can supply this delicacy, but not until the folk at home look with kindlier eyes upon the despised “tin.”

CHAPTER XXXII

THE OUTLOOK IN TASMANIA

I FREELY admit that Van Diemen's Land greatly fascinated me. Its varied scenery, its mountains, its mild climate, its fertility, each left their impression. I was fortunate enough to fall into the kind hands of several gentlemen who have greatly helped in the making of Tasmania, and they made my tour not only a pleasure, but the means of acquiring a great deal of information about the actual state of the country and its immediate prospects. With two or three motor-cars at one's disposal, driven by gentlemen who know the country through and through, and with authority to travel anywhere I chose on the State railways, my way was made exceedingly easy.

I promised in this chapter to write about Tasmania as a colony for the British people. Little Britain, in the North Sea, does not know very much about its possessions in the Pacific and the Indian Ocean. The average Englishman knows practically nothing about Tasmania. But he ought to know something about it. Tasmanians are not a self-assertive people. They do not advertise their country. Hence, for the many, it remains a land in the mist.

The area of the island, including the small islands

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to the north, is nearly seventeen million acres. About one-third of this space is under cultivation. The entire population is less than 200,000—about one-third the population of the City of Melbourne. The average population works out at six or seven persons to the square mile. It will be seen at once that the island is sparsely populated. The need of Tasmania is population, though not nearly to the same extent as Australia. Men who have the right to speak with authority upon the matter declare that Tasmania needs a population of one million persons in order that it may be profitably developed. The railways at present entail a loss of £70,000 per annum. A Special Commissioner has recently been appointed to try to grapple with this particular problem. He has instructions to make the railways pay. But they cannot pay until there is a larger influx of inhabitants.

Now, there are three things concerning Tasmania that should be of interest to very many Englishmen, both from the point of view of capital and the point of view of emigration, i.e. fruit, power, and minerals.

I have said that two-thirds of the land is not yet under cultivation. It is only right to say that at present there is little prospect of this territory being explored and subdued, and even if there were, it is doubtful if a great part of it is arable land. The forest is exceedingly dense, and men soon become "bushed." When it is cleared it may turn out to be very valuable property, or it may not. But it is believed that part of this hidden country is rich in minerals, if not in soil. And, further, it is as likely

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as not that the land may bear apples, since it is demonstrated that an inferior soil can produce prolific crops of apples. Leaving aside, then, all that is doubtful, and dealing only with the Tasmania that is known, the possibilities of a great development of the country are bound up with fruit, power, and minerals.

Fruit, first of all. An immense development can take place in this direction. There are hundreds of thousands of acres of "bush" awaiting the coming of the farmer. We had a striking illustration of what may be done in an excursion to the Russell Falls. After leaving the fruitful Derwent Valley, and bidding farewell to the railway at Russell, we plunged into the bush. In every direction stretched out the scrub. Few people beyond tourists ever pass along this way. So quiet is the road that serpents come forth from the undergrowth and stretch themselves in the sunshine which floods the dusty route. We ran over two of these reptiles, one of them measuring five feet in length. Here and there we espied huts in which settlers were residing; from various points rose wreaths of smoke, an indication that the work of "burning off" was in progress. At the entrance to the Russell Falls we encountered a typical settler, who speedily showed us how quickly an energetic man can subdue the bush and make it fruitful. Eighteen months ago this man purchased seventy-two acres of land. Including the fees for survey, the land cost him £39, and he was allowed fourteen years in which to pay the money. A day

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or two ago he was offered £2,000 for the property. Wisely he declined the offer, for the prospects of his investment are worth more to him than £2,000. He is comparatively a young man, with a family of small children. Given health and strength, his future is secured, and all for an outlay of £39. The rest depends upon his toil. Already, in this brief period, he has planted 115 apple trees, and has made the ground bear a healthy crop of strawberries, raspberries, peas, hops, and potatoes. Past his door runs the river, in which, the night before our visit, over three hundred trout were caught by some fifteen fishermen, our settler himself being responsible for forty of these. Birds, fish, rabbits, and hares are all in the neighbourhood. The property contains about three thousand eucalyptus trees, which will all be felled and used for firewood. In two years' time the railway will pass through this estate, and of course increase its value. At present the homestead is isolated. The nearest pillar-box for the reception of letters is some distance away on the roadside, and consists of an old candle-box secured to the stump of a tree. In a few years all this will be changed as the land is rendered fertile. What this man has done others are doing and others may do. This subjugation of the soil is one of the most healthful and lucrative of employments. It should attract a number of the right class of Englishmen.

At Moonah I saw the prospectus of a scheme for planting and developing orchard land. In the place named in the prospectus land is offered, right out,

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by the Government for ten shillings an acre. It carries 200,000 tons of firewood, and in ground crops and orchard would yield very speedily an amazing profit.

The fruit industry, then, I place first of all.

Next to this is the development of power. Tasmania is noted for its lakes, all of which are situated amongst the mountains at an altitude of 3,000 or more feet above the sea. A great scheme for utilising this water in the production of electric power is now actually in progress. Hobart can be supplied with power for lighting, heating, and locomotion, and the country *en route* from the lakes can all be opened up to the magic wire. This means a great thing for the island, and holds the promise of great developments. Tasmania may yet be able to show civilisation that smoke is entirely unnecessary in commercial and domestic life. Certain it is that the future of Tasmania will be materially affected by the introduction of electric power on the scale proposed. And Melbourne, which for a city under the Southern Cross has far too much smoke, might condescend to learn from Tasmania a lesson in sweetness and light.

And, finally, there is the development of minerals.

There are tin mines in Tasmania which have a world-wide reputation—the Mount Bischoff and the Mount Lyell. They have both proved to be a means of fortune to the shareholders. During the half-year ended December 31, 1911, the ore smelted at the Launceston works yielded 1,417 tons of fine tin, and a good proportion of this came from the Mount

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Bischoff mine. The dividends for the last half-year amounted to thirty thousand pounds sterling, and when it is remembered that the capital of the company is only sixty thousand pounds, it will be seen that the earnings are remarkable. These mountains of tin show no sign of diminution. Tasmania stands third in the world of tin production. Beyond tin, there are copper, gold, iron ore, and coal worked in the island, and it is practically known that the unexplored part of the island contains minerals in abundance.

These three things, then, hold abundant promise for the future of Tasmania from the commercial point of view, while the salubrious climate establishes the claim of the place to be a grand health resort for the southern and other peoples.

As I went from place to place in the island, and observed the sparseness of the population, the situation assumed something of a pathetic aspect. There is room enough for immigrants up to a certain number. An influx of 800,000 persons would make Tasmania one of the most prosperous places in the world. With such a population the limitations of the island would always prevent the growth of those disproportions between the classes which obtain in the great areas of the Old and New Worlds. Tasmania might, well governed, become a model State. Its situation in the sea puts it in touch with Australia, New Zealand, and the islands. In the fruit season the great liners call at Hobart for fruit. By means of these Tasmania has a direct connection with Europe. That connection will be immensely

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strengthened when the larger population arrives. On the other hand, the isolation of Tasmania from the mainland will always preserve for the island a degree of quietness of which hustling centres know nothing. The union of repose and commercial and agricultural activity would be ideal, and it is possible in Tasmania as in few places I have seen.

These facts are surely worthy of the consideration of the British people.

CHAPTER XXXIII

REVIEW

A PERIOD of five years is sufficiently long to enable a man to correct or to confirm his earlier impressions of a people. Looking backward, I find I have very little, if anything, to correct of my first impressions of Australia and its people. It may be an advantage, therefore, to set down in better order than is possible in fugitive correspondence some of the deepened impressions which a careful study of Australian life has created. During my sojourn under the Southern Cross I visited the capitals of all the Australian States—Tasmania included—from Brisbane to Perth and Hobart. This has meant a good deal of travelling by land and sea. But travelling on the main routes in Australia is rendered luxurious by means of corridor trains, with sleeping, observation, and dining-cars attached; and also by means of a remarkable service of coastal steamers, second to none in the world. The luxury of such boats as the *Indarra* and *Canberra* exceeds by far anything of which the P. and O. or Orient companies can boast. It is off the track that travelling becomes a weariness and a torment*. But it has been my lot to travel off and on the main routes, with the result that the very

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first impression which Australia made upon me has been immensely strengthened, namely, that of the vast territory of the country and its enormous natural wealth. A map enables one to understand a little of the vastness of this lone land, but the reality does not actually seize the mind until a person begins to travel over its wonderful spaces. Upon this continent I have experienced every kind of climate, from the tropical, with its enervating heat, to the frigid, with its bracing cold. What other land can grow the varied fruits that flourish in Australia? What other country can boast the possession of more than half the kinds of precious stones in existence? Think of the sugar-cane, the pineapple, the mango, and the common English gooseberry growing upon the same soil! Think of gold, silver, tin, and coal cheek by jowl! When it is claimed that Australia is naturally the richest country in the world, who that knows the facts can deny the claim? Its possibilities are unbounded. The merest fraction only of the natural riches of the land has thus far been touched, and out of this fraction men have made enormous fortunes. It seems to me that Australia may easily become the granary, the dairy, the orchard, and the wool supply of the Empire. Capital and labour alone are required to develop the land. There are millions of acres yet untouched, while the northern territory is crying aloud for men to come and unlock the treasure house of Nature, hitherto hidden from the whites.

But here the question of a White Australia pre-

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sents itself. The Commonwealth is committed to this policy. Meanwhile, what of the great north? It is admitted that white men cannot labour to advantage in that terrible climate. There are many of our fellow-subjects in India who could work there, and would, if they were permitted, but then they may not cross the colour line. Australia is to be reserved for a white population. It need not necessarily be British. Already it is, in small parts, Spanish, German, Greek, and Italian; but it must be white. It is only fair to say that Australians, in deciding upon this "white" policy, are not animated by selfishness, as is sometimes supposed. They honestly fear the appearance of a negro problem such as exists in America, and many of them fear it upon moral grounds. But such a problem does not present itself when it is the question of coloured persons, who in intelligence, diligence, *and morality* are quite equal to the average white man. It is better not to press this question of "white" morality in the north, even in Australia, or some very ugly stories could be told. Looking at the matter dispassionately, in full view of all the factors—the northern climate being the chief—it would seem that Australia must yet modify—if it does not abandon—its "white" policy. Economically it will have to do so, and politically it may yet be forced to do so, for "coloured" nations like Japan and China, which admit whites into their countries, are not likely to bear for ever the insult which is implied in their exclusion from the midst of a people to whom they are in no way inferior.

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The other question concerns labour. Unless there is a speedy, amicable understanding between masters and men, the productive power of the Commonwealth will be seriously hindered. Labour here, as everywhere else, has had to fight for its rights, and, so far as Australia is concerned, it has won some notable victories. In no place is the working-man so well-off as here. His hours of labour are fixed upon the basis of an eight hours' day. Wages Boards determine his rate of pay. His health and limbs are protected in every possible way. There are really no "dangerous" trades for him on this account. He can claim equality with his master. He is never called upon to grovel to a "superior." He is a creature entirely independent. More often than not he owns his own house, while he has a substantial sum standing to his name in the savings bank. His daughter can earn her thirty to forty shillings a week behind the counter or at the typist's desk, and yet, despite all this, there is scarcely a week without its local strike. Upon the least pretence tools are "downed." Ferment is nearly always in the air. Professional agitators take care to keep strife stirring. In a word, labour is tending to become a tyranny. And it is due to the fact, largely, that amongst the leaders are no such strong men as Britain has in Philip Snowden, Ramsay Macdonald, or Arthur Henderson. The strife is often unreasoning, and it nearly always ends in a reverse for the striker. The present temper of labour in the Commonwealth—especially that phase of it which is hostile to religion in any

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form—is a distinct menace to the prosperity of the country.

Side by side with this question is that of the culture of the people. A people materially prosperous in a new land are liable to forget the higher things. Wealth tends to make them vulgar, and to limit their horizon. Australia has not escaped this danger. There are very many refined people—especially in connection with the Churches—who keep themselves abreast of current thought; people who live in tasteful houses, who are models of courtesy, and who generally understand the art of *savoir vivre*. The children of many wealthy people proceed to the university. There are hundreds of young women in Melbourne who have graduated in Arts, Science, or Law, not in order to obtain a livelihood, but solely for the culture which the study brings. But the rank and file of the people—who obtain good wages—have little intellectual ambition beyond the football or the cricket fields, or the prize ring at the Stadium. The manners of this particular rank and file leave much to be desired. The doctrine that “Jack is as good as his master,” as practised in Australia, too often results, not in the elevation of Jack to the rank of his master, but in the coarsening of Jack. The Chief Justice has recently lectured Australia’s youth upon its rudeness. The rebuke was deserved. Australians are most polite to their women, and true gentlemen everywhere are polite to each other, but there is a tendency amongst others to be too brusque and even disrespectful. It is due largely to thought-

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lessness, and it belongs to a certain stage in the evolution of a country's life. Yet it need not be in Australia. Politeness does not cost much—a little more polish would make the street Australian one of the best men in existence. His natural qualities are excellent; he needs only, on the social side, a little more consideration for the feelings of others. Nothing is more necessary for this young country than the inculcation of the spirit of respect.

My earlier impression of the new type of British life which is being evolved under the Southern Cross has been abundantly confirmed during the last five years. There can be no question that the Australian type of Briton is wholly different from the English type. For this difference the climate is chiefly responsible. Close observation has revealed the fact that the third generation of Australians—that is, the generation which owns for its parents an Australian-born father and mother—tends towards the Italian, Sicilian, or Spanish type rather than the English, having jet black hair and dark eyes. This is particularly noticeable in Sydney and in Queensland. Life there is largely Neapolitan in character.

A Neapolitan climate is producing a Neapolitan type of men and women. The atmosphere of Puritanism, which has lingered over England even until this day, is wholly absent from Australia. The break between the two ways of life is complete, and the distance between them seems destined to become wider. The British prejudice against the theatre, for example, does not exist out here. Great numbers of

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Church members openly patronise the playhouse. Some of the devoutest and most earnest Christian men I know find a place in their programme for the theatre, when good plays are staged. Australians, as a whole, are a sport-loving people. They are a happy people. They take all life in the sunshine, even their religious life. The minor chords are entirely absent from their music. All is gay and lively. This spirit has invaded the Sabbath. The old-fashioned Sunday exists only for a small minority of persons. During the summer months tens of thousands of people spend the week-end among the hills or by the seaside, and the vast majority of these never trouble the Churches. Yet, if they were challenged, they would disclaim hostility to the Church. They might even contribute to its funds. Nevertheless, Sunday is for them a day of pleasure. This problem of climate and its influence upon character and religion is one of the most serious the country has to face.

Time has not effaced my earliest impression that the Defence Act needs serious reconsideration. In part justification it is pleaded that already many lads of the "larrikin" type have benefited physically and morally as the result of drill. I am prepared to admit that, up to a certain point. But, on the other hand, the withdrawal of boys from technical evening schools for the purpose of training, more than balances the gains. Australia needs, very badly, a race of competent workmen who can finish their tasks. The discipline of apprenticeship would secure some of that training which the Defence System aims at; and it

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would secure that higher skill which we need. Nobody objects to the boys being subject to discipline and training; our objection is to this training being associated with militarism. There is no need for the creation of the military spirit in Australia; it is politically a blunder, morally indefensible, and economically a burden too great for the people to carry.

To bid farewell to Australia is not easy. I have learned to love the country and the people. They have treated me well, and I wish them well. May the land of the wattle ever flourish, and its vast continent be filled with a happy, peaceful, God-fearing people to whom EMPIRE shall ever stand for all that is great, noble and good.



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Spurr, Frederic Chambers
Five years under the
Southern cross

